

SHAFT

by

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FADE IN:

INT. ELLIE MOORE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CLOSEUP -  
SHAFT AND ELLIE - HIGH ANGLE - DAWN

1

The muscles rippling across the bare back of JOHN SHAFT, a twenty-eight-year-old Negro, as we HEAR the sound of sheets rustling and eager little man-woman cries or murmurs of lovemaking. In the final moment of the act, ELLIE MOORE'S white arm moves across his back, stroking, clutching.

ELLIE'S VOICE

Oh, John.  
(a beat)  
John!

We MOVE UP to their heads, his face buried in her neck, her attractive mid-twenties face nuzzling close to him, almost seraphic in the after-glow of orgasm, her light brown hair sprayed against his darkness. Her eyes blind open after a moment and she hugs him firmly but with finality. The party's over.

ELLIE (softly)

You better get moving.

Shaft's head rises slowly. As he looks at her, we can see the bicycle-chain scar stitched across his forehead.

SHAFT

I thought I was moving pretty good.

ELLIE (slightly

exasperated)

Please!

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELLIE MOORE'S BEDROOM - DAWN

2

Shaft, in trousers, sitting on the edge of the bed in the shade-darkened apartment, pulling on his socks and shoes. He has a towel draped around his neck and broad, muscular shoulders. A cigarette burns in the ashtray on the bedside table. SOUNDS of coffee-making, clinking cups and saucers, come from the kitchen.

ELLIE'S VOICE (o.s.)  
Do you want some juice?

2  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT  
Yeah.  
(beat)  
That cleanin' lady don't care about  
your morals. All she's got in her  
head is two-fifty an hour and tokens.

ANGLE WIDENS

3

as Shaft drags on the cigarette and tosses towel  
on the back of a chair. Ellie comes into the room  
carrying coffee in one hand, juice in the other  
and we see that she is a tall, well-stacked girl  
wearing a thigh-length wrapper. She hands juice  
and coffee to Shaft.

ELLIE (matter-of-  
factly)  
I traded two Brazilian tennis  
players for her...

SHAFT (derisively)  
Faggots.

ELLIE  
They weren't fags!  
(beat)  
Well, maybe one of them - but if  
it's you or losing a good maid,  
guess who goes?

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NINTH AVENUE AND 23RD  
STREET - MOVING SHOTS - DAY

4

Shaft walking north on Ninth Avenue toward 23rd  
Street, a tall, solidly built black man in a light-  
weight gray wool suit, light blue shirt and dark  
red tie, a short, well-tailored raincoat-topcoat.  
His eyes covered with large black shades. His stride  
is loose, quick and confident - a man in tune with  
his body. The streets are virtually empty.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - 34TH STREET - MOVING  
SHOTS - DAY

5

Shaft walking east on 34th, also virtually deserted,  
between Sixth and Seventh, the sun glinting over  
buildings, glaring into the CAMERA.

EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - BROADWAY AT 40TH STREET -  
MOVING SHOTS - DAY

6

Shaft legging it across Broadway, west to east. He glances toward Times Square, then to a corner phone booth as we PAN to Times Square, still relatively dormant.

INT. THOMPSON STREET APARTMENT - CARMEN CORELLI'S  
ROOM - DAY

7

CARMEN CORELLI, a late-thirties meatball Italian type with the scars of an ex-fighter, raises cracked oilcloth shade on window and lets the sun into a small, dank room. He scratches a hairy muscular arm, yawns as he looks out the window for a few moments. There is an o.s. RUSTLING, CREAKING of bedsprings and the beginnings of a whimpering moan behind him. Carmen glances OUT OF FRAME toward the sounds, yawns again and rubs his face.

ANGLE ON DRESSER TOP

8

as Carmen picks up hypodermic, small vial and holds them in the sunlight. He fills the hypo with colorless liquid, removes the bottle. The needle glints in the sunlight. The o.s. whimpering grows more urgent.

INT. THOMPSON STREET APARTMENT - BED

9

The bed, where slender, lovely BEATRICE PERSONS, nineteen, black and nude, squirms beneath a light blanket, her eyes pleading to the CAMERA as we DOLLY IN. The closer we get, the more agitated and eager Beatrice becomes until the needle, in Carmen's hand, comes INTO THE FRAME.

BEATRICE

Please! Please!

CARMEN

Sure, baby. Sure - you know what you got to do - and you can have all you want.

Beatrice throws aside the blanket and there is a view of her beautiful nude body arching toward Corelli, mouth open, eyes pleading. The advancing needle and Corelli's form blocks our view as her whimpering becomes a moan.

9  
CONT'D  
(2)

EXT. WEST HUDSON STREET - PIER - ZOOM SHOT - DAY

10

ZOOM IN on loading operations for long, narrow crates being raised off dock, over deck of freighters and lowered into cargo hold.

EXT. WEST HUDSON STREET - PIER - MOVING SHOTS - DAY

11

A city sanitation department truck backs out on to the dock. The young BLACK DRIVER is guided by two BLACK HELPERS walking beside the truck. It grinds slowly to a collection of garbage cans, the side of the freighter in the b.g.

EXT. WEST HUDSON STREET - PIER - DAY

12

A work gang of EIGHT LONGSHOREMEN, five Irish and Italian types, three blacks, is loading the long narrow boxes on the hoisting platform while the garbage truck crew dumps cans into the back of the truck. The longshoremen signal that the platform is loaded as we DOLLY IN to read the stencilling on the boxes:

CONTENTS: 20 M-16 carbines

U.S. ARMY  
BUREAU OF ORDNANCE  
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KAN.

TRACK THE CRATES

as they are hoisted onto the ship. The boxes move out of sight and the LOADING OFFICER on the freighter turns to watch.

13

CAMERA PANS SWIFTLY

14

back to dockside where two longshoremen pick up a crate and pass it swiftly to the garbage truck

helpers, who throw it in the back of the garbage truck. The driver pulls the lever and the box disappears in the trash.

14  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANOTHER ANGLE

15

as the longshoremen go back to the loading platform routine and the truck pulls away.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - CLOSEUP - SHAFT - DAY

16

Holding phone with his shoulder, Shaft flips open small notepad and gets out a ballpoint.

SHAFT

Morning, Mildred. John Shaft.  
Anything?

MILDRED'S VOICE

(Jewish-mother querulous)  
I've been getting calls for you all night.

(beat)

But they wouldn't say who it was or leave a number. Just wanted to know if you'd called...where they could reach you.

SHAFT (puzzled)

Men? Women?

MILDRED'S VOICE

Men. Two or three. They said they'd call back.

SHAFT (putting away  
pad and pen)

Okay. They call back, tell them nothing. You haven't heard from me.

MILDRED'S VOICE

Okay.

EXT. 42ND STREET AND BROADWAY - NEWSPAPER KIOSK - DAY

17

ACROSS Shaft to MARTY, the blind newsdealer as Shaft slips the second copy from the top of the New York Times stack, drops fifteen cents into the outstretched palm.

SHAFT  
Marty. What's new?

17  
CONT'D  
(2)

MARTY (staring  
blindly)  
Some guys around looking for you.

Shaft is glancing at the headlines, or seeming to.

SHAFT  
Yeah? What guys?

MARTY  
I dunno. They didn't smell right.  
I never seen them around before.

SHAFT  
Thanks, Marty. Take care.

MARTY  
Take care y'self.

INT. DRAGO SHINE PARLOR - SHINE STAND - DAY

18

From rear of shop to Shaft, coming in carrying the Times, a paper bag containing a carton of coffee. TWO SHINE BOYS, both in their mid-thirties, are standing near the front of the shop drinking coffee and smoking. They nod to him coolly as he moves toward the end of the row of high shine chairs.

INT. DRAGO SHINE PARLOR - SHAFT'S CHAIR - LOW  
ANGLE - DAY

19

Shine boy's POV of Shaft sitting on the chair, paper on his lap, taking the lid off container of coffee. He drips hot liquid on his thigh. He has taken off the shades and put them in a pocket.

SHAFT (wincing)  
Ow! Goddammit.

REVERSE ANGLE - SHAFT'S POV

20

A sixtyish BLACK SHINE BOY is buffing Shaft's shoes, smoking a cigarette and doing a little routine of casualness. He does not look at Shaft when he speaks.

SHINE BOY  
Two of 'em around.

20  
CONT'D  
(2)

BACK TO SHAFT

21

SHAFT (looking at  
paper)  
I know them?

BACK TO SHINE BOY

22

Buffing with rag.

SHINE BOY  
You should. They from uptown.  
(a beat - a snap of the  
rag)  
And they want you bad.

BACK TO SHAFT

23

He reaches into his pocket and we DOLLY IN on his hands to see him slipping a ten-dollar bill into the folds of the newspaper.

ANGLE WIDENS

24

as Shaft gets down, hands the paper to the shine boy.

SHAFT  
Here. Improve your mind.

SHINE BOY  
Shee-yut!

He folds Times under his arm as Shaft moves away.

EXT. BROADWAY - SHINE PARLOR EXIT - MOVING SHOTS -  
DAY

25

Shaft emerges from Drago and turns north. He glances toward the curb and we PAN with his glance for Shaft's POV to an unmarked police car parked at



the curb, heavy-set, tough-looking THOMAS HANNON sitting at the wheel, wearing shades, chewing gun. He's looking at Shaft.

25  
CONT'D  
(2)

EXT. BROADWAY - SIDEWALK - OVERHEAD SHOT - DAY

26

Shaft turns and starts moving quickly toward the Square.

HANNON'S VOICE (o.s.)

Hey, Johnny!

Shaft keeps moving. There is a moment of hesitation as Lt. VICTOR ANDEROZZI appears from the entrance arcade of the Whelan's at the corner and blocks Shaft's path, Hannon moving to the curb to put Shaft in a triangle. Anderozzi is about forty-five, a lean gray man with a hawkish look.

EXT. BROADWAY AND 42ND STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

27

THROUGH AND BETWEEN Anderozzi and Hannon to Shaft, whose normally placid and cool face reflects growing irritation.

ANDEROZZI (half smiling)

'Morning, Johnny.

SHAFT

Lieutenant. You're up early.

ANDEROZZI

Or late. Depends on when you start counting.

SHAFT

Okay, you're up late. What do you want?

ANDEROZZI

A little talk. Let's go back to the car and talk.

SHAFT

What about?

ANDEROZZI

Tell you in the car.

SHAFT  
Fuck you. Tell me right here or  
get the hell out of my way.

27  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANDEROZZI (smile  
fading)  
Don't get upset, John. All I want  
is a small chat.

SHAFT (angrily)  
Then talk, Goddammit.  
(a beat)  
Every place I've gone this morning  
- including the can - somebody's  
been pushing me or looking for me.  
I've had enough of it.

EXT. BROADWAY - DRAGO SHOP

28

ACROSS THREE BLACK SHINE BOYS who have clustered  
at door of the shop to see what's happening to  
Shaft up the block.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHAFT, ANDEROZZI

29

The confrontation has grown more tense.

ANDEROZZI (placating-  
ly)  
All right. All right. Let's take  
a little walk...get a bag of cof-  
fee or something.

He slips an arm through Shaft's and starts to  
walk toward 42nd Street, away from the car.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - BENCH - SHAFT AND ANDEROZZI -  
DAY

30

Anderozzi and Shaft are sitting on a bench, sip-  
ping at containers of coffee.

ANDEROZZI  
You a little cooler?

SHAFT  
No.

ANDEROZZI

Okay.

(glancing at Shaft)

For the last two weeks, every cop in Harlem has been getting the scam that something is about to break loose. But they don't hear what or why.

SHAFT

It's been a long time coming.

ANDEROZZI

I'm not talking about revolutions. That's something else.

30  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANGLE WIDENS

as ELDERLY WINO shuffles up to them, hand extended.

WINO (mumbling)

Let a guy have something for some breakfass... Will ya?

Anderozzi puts his coffee container in the wino's hand. The drunk looks at it and carries it away without comment or drinking it.

SHAFT (watching wino)

Man, as far as I'm concerned that's a bad neighborhood - and I don't go into 'em. What's it got to do with me?

ANDEROZZI

Nothing, something, I don't know. But I have to find out. I want to know why two muscle types from Harlem are suddenly looking for John Shaft.

SHAFT

For Christ's sake, why don't you ask them?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Shaft gets up, crumples the cup into a ball. Anderozzi looks up at him.

ANDEROZZI

I figure you for better answers.

31

32

SHAFT (exasperated)  
Look, Lieutenant, I don't have any  
answers.

32  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANDEROZZI (coolly)  
Why don't you get some? - and give  
me a call. All right?

SHAFT (turning away)  
Oh, Jesus!

EXT. WEST 46TH STREET - SIDEWALK - MOVING SHOT -  
DAY

33

Shaft walks east to west on 46th Street between  
Sixth and Times Square. He is glancing around  
warily, checking all the people and places, then  
up to the third-floor corner office.

SHAFT'S POV - PANNING SHOTS

34

of the work-rush PEDESTRIANS, reflections, shop-  
windows and UP the side of the building at 46th  
and Broadway to HOLD a moment on the third-floor  
corner office.

REVERSE ANGLE

35

to Shaft, looking up, hesitating a beat, then look-  
ing to the shop on his right - a small bookstore  
specializing in pornography. He turns toward it.

INT. PORNOGRAPHY SHOP - ENTRANCE - HIGH ANGLE -  
MOVING SHOTS - DAY

36

FROM REAR of shop to Shaft coming in door, past  
the fiftyish STORE OPERATOR, who is flashing a  
packet of nude pictures for a middle-aged CUSTOMER.  
The store operator looks at Shaft over the tops  
of his glasses and they exchange nods while the  
customer stays glued to the pictures. Shaft con-  
tinues quickly down the aisle toward rear of  
store and passes CAMERA.

INT. PORNOGRAPHY SHOP - REAR HALLWAY - DAY

37

Shaft moves down long, narrow hallway, through heavy metal door with sign reading KEEP DOOR CLOSED. In b.g. we see building stairwell.

INT. 46TH STREET BUILDING - STAIRWELL - CLOSEUP - SHAFT - DAY

38

Shaft in TIGHT CLOSEUP at wire-mesh glass window of door from stairwell into building lobby as he scans lobby scene in b.g.

BUILDING LOBBY - SHAFT'S POV - ZOOM SHOT

39

ZOOM in on LEROY JACKSON, tall, extremely thin Negro, about forty, standing at pocketbook rack with back to Shaft, facing lobby area in b.g. PAN SWIFTLY to CIGAR STAND OPERATOR selling gum and cigarettes to male and female OFFICE WORKERS, then to ELEVATOR STARTER, sixtyish, red-faced in a slightly shabby brass-buttoned blue uniform, then back to Leroy Jackson, obviously watching the arrivals in the lobby.

INT. 46TH STREET BUILDING - STAIRWELL - MOVING SHOTS - DAY

40

Shaft watches elevator door close, takes a breath and slips very quickly out the door into lobby.

INT. 46TH STREET BUILDING - LOBBY - MOVING SHOTS - DAY

41

Shaft moves so swiftly he is almost a blur as he comes up behind Leroy Jackson and brings his right fist down on the top of Jackson's spine like a sledge hammer.

CLOSE-UP - JACKSON AND SHAFT

42

The shock and pain wash over Jackson's face, his eyes buldge, his jaw drops open with a strangled little groan as he goes out. Over his shoulder, Shaft's face is tight with the power of the thrust.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

43

As Jackson's legs shoot out and kick over the book rack, spilling volumes across the floor while Shaft pulls Jackson erect, one arm around the man's waist, another holding Jackson's arms over his own shoulder.

## ANGLE WIDENS

44

to INCLUDE sixtyish CIGAR COUNTER CLERK picking up stand and books, ignoring Shaft's movement toward the elevator with Jackson.

## ELEVATOR STARTER'S POV - SHAFT AND JACKSON

45

Shaft has one of Jackson's arms around his neck, one of his own around the man's waist in a "dead man" carry, moving toward the elevators.

ANGLE WIDENS to startled elevator starter, two or three OFFICE GIRLS coming into lobby, shocked by the appearance of Shaft and Jackson.

## ELEVATOR STARTER

Hey - what's the trouble, Mr. Shaft?

## SHAFT

No trouble, Jimmy. Friend of mine...  
had a tooth out...fainted.

Shaft reaches over and slaps Jackson's loosely wobbling head lightly.

## SHAFT

Come on, Willie. It's all right.

Come on.

(to operator)

I'll take him upstairs and let  
him rest.

## ELEVATOR OPERATOR

(real concern)

Is there anything I can...?

Shaft is hauling Jackson aboard an empty car.

ELEVATOR OPERATOR  
(holding out arms)  
Okay, folks, take the next car.  
Man had a little fainting spell.  
(as doors close)  
My mother did the same thing once  
on the BMT...

46  
CONT'D  
(2)

INT. 46TH STREET BUILDING - THIRD FLOOR CORRIDOR -  
MOVING SHOTS - DAY

47

Shaft drags Jackson down the long hallway with hands under the unconscious man's arms, and props Jackson against wall opposite one of the office doors. We MOVE IN as Shaft roughly jerks open Jackson's coat and removes .45 caliber Colt 1917 Army Model revolver from waistband.

ANGLE ON SHAFT

48

as he looks at the huge pistol a moment in disbelief, then tucks it into his belt, left of the buckle.

INT. 46TH STREET BUILDING - CLOSEUP - SHAFT'S DOOR -  
DAY

49

The legend JOHN SHAFT, INC., INVESTIGATIONS fills the FRAME as Shaft's hand appears from SCREEN RIGHT and raps sharply with a knuckle. We HOLD on the door as it inches open and full, heavy face of LEANDER JONES appears. His eyes glance quickly downward OUT OF FRAME to:

REVERSE ANGLE - JACKSON

50

The unconscious form on the floor.

BACK TO JONES - CLOSEUP

51

Shaft's hand crashes into the side of Jones' head.

INT. SHAFT'S OFFICE - DESK - LOW ANGLE - DAY

52

Shaft, in profile, is sitting in a wood swivel chair at a somewhat battered wood desk. The office wall in the b.g. is dirty beige and bare except for Shaft's license and a calendar. He's going through his mail, picking up envelopes, holding them to the light, then ripping them open. We cannot see the desk top as he performs this ordinary office routine -- throwing some of the mail away, making notations on others. Occasionally he glances OUT OF FRAME to his right. He hums tunelessly throughout these moments, finally finishes the mail and reaches for an object on the desk. CAMERA MOVES UP as we see it is the .45, which he now examines by flipping open the cylinder. It's fully loaded.

The .45 in Shaft's hands is only one of three guns on the green blotter - one chrome-plated .38 revolver with yellowing pearl grips and a .25 caliber Browning automatic. Also on the desk are two switch-blades, homemade brass knuckles of screw-studded industrial belt with a metal cylinder hand grip, an ordinary police-style blackjack, two wads of twenty-dollar bills, some change and keys, matches and cigarettes. He pokes at them with the muzzle of the .45, then swivels half-circle to his right, gun in hand.

SHAFT'S POV - FLOOR AND WALL

53

Jackson and Jones are slumped against the wall. Jackson is crushed and broken, Jones less injured and more upright. Jones grunts in a muscle spasm and begins to move. As he does, Shaft puts the muzzle of the .45 almost directly under the man's nose.

REVERSE ANGLE - JONES' POV

54

The swimming, swirling double and triple image of Shaft as the CAMERA (Jones) blinks out of unconsciousness and focuses on Shaft and the gun. Shaft's face is grim, contemptuous.

REVERSE ANGLE - SHAFT'S POV

55

The stocky black man ignores the gun and raises his hand to wipe at a trickle of blood at the corner of his mouth. His hate-filled eyes glare at Shaft.



SHAFT  
What do you want and who sent you?

55  
CONT'D  
(2)

JONES  
I'm gonna kill your ass.

ANOTHER ANGLE

56

Shaft draws back slightly, more in a crouch than sitting on the chair.

SHAFT  
Gonna kill me, huh?

He holds the gun on Jones and leans forward to grab wide lapels of Jackson's suit. Very quickly, he jerks Jackson forward, whips him to SCREEN RIGHT with all his strength.

INT. SHAFT'S OFFICE - WINDOW - DAY

57

FROM door ACROSS Shaft holding gun steady on Jones to Jackson dancing across floor and crashing through window.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - 46TH STREET BUILDING - LOW ANGLE - DAY

58

Jackson flying out the window in a sleetstorm of shattered glass and falling directly toward the CAMERA and we FREEZE FRAME.

MAIN TITLE ROLLS OVER

SHAFT

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - JACKSON - LOW ANGLE

59

The body continues its slow certain descent to the pavement (CAMERA).

INT. SHAFT'S OFFICE - JONES AND SHAFT - DAY

60

Jones looks at the gun in Shaft's hand in disbelief, terror. Shaft pulls back the hammer. Jones' face is collapsing, covered with sweat.

SHAFT (dead cool)

Gonna kill my ass, huh?

(a beat)

Well, you got two minutes. Maybe.  
Two minutes to tell me what I want  
to know before they come up here...

Brakes SCREECH, HORNS sound, women scream in the  
street below.

SHAFT (cont'd)

...and ask me why I threw that sonof-  
abitch out the window, and why I  
shot you right through the fucking  
head like you was the worst dog in  
the world.

(a beat as SIREN sounds)

Hear that? That's the meat wagon  
from the morgue coming to scrape him  
up and carry you out of here. Lis-  
ten - and answer me good.

JONES (blubbing)

Knocks said we was to get you and  
bring you... Knocks said he didn't  
care what...we was to just get you  
up there. Knocks said...

Shaft lowers the hammer on the gun with his thumb.  
Then cocks it again in a sudden urge to pull the  
trigger. But doesn't.

INT. HARLEM BASEMENT - CARBINE CRATE - PANNING  
SHOTS - DAY

61

The carbine crate is garbage stained and battered,  
but still intact on the floor of a dimly lighted  
cavern. Now it is being used as a pedestal, which  
we discover PANNING UPWARD from the box to the booted  
feet standing on it. There is a rumble of male  
conversation as we begin. But it ceases abruptly  
and completely when one of the boots rises and  
stamps hard with three distinct RAPS. A call to  
order. In the silence, we continue to PAN UP the  
long, lean body of BEN BUFORD, mid-twentyish black.  
In yellow-tinted gold-framed glasses, Buford's face  
is scholarly, ascetic beneath an Afro bush of hair.

INT. HARLEM BASEMENT - BUFORD AND MEN - PANNING  
SHOTS - DAY

62

ACROSS Buford in profile to about THIRTY YOUNG  
BLACKS in costumes that range from berets and hip-  
length leather top coats, dajeeekhis to Cardin  
suits of the sort worn by Buford. Buford raises  
his hand and points a finger toward them like a  
pistol, moving back and forth across the deter-  
mined angry faces.

BUFORD

How long have we waited?

CROWD VOICES

Too long...four hundred years...  
long enough, Ben...a long time,  
brother...forever...a lifetime...  
too long...four hundred years...

BUFORD (pausing until

all the shouts die down)

Have we waited long enough?

CROWD (roar in  
unison)

Yes!

BUFORD

Do we wait any longer?

CROWD

No!

BUFORD

Are you ready?

CROWD

Yes!

CLOSEUP OF BUFORD - CROWD POV

63

He has reached a near frenzy of hatred.

BUFORD

Are you ready to goddamn die if  
you have to?

CROWD

Yes!

BUFORD (voice softer,  
more controlled)  
So am I, brothers.  
(a beat)  
We're all ready.  
(a beat)  
To get rid of every black pimp who  
sells his brother's soul for silver...to stand up like men against  
the honky bastards.

63  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANGLE WIDENS

64

as Buford steps down from the crate.

BUFORD  
Take 'em! And keep 'em ready.

He kicks the lid off the crate and we DOLLY IN on the gleaming rifles as several pairs of hands plunge into the crate and, one by one, swiftly remove the rifles. HOLD on the rifles, with the SOUNDS of bolts snapping and mechanisms being tried o.s. until the box is empty.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - ANDEROSZI'S OFFICE - CLOSEUP -  
MYRON LIEBOWITZ

65

MYRON LIEBOWITZ, thirtyish and pudgy behind horn-rim glasses, looks as if he is suffering from Excedrin headache 32.

LIEBOWITZ (exasperated)  
Mr. Shaft, I'm trying to find out  
why you killed a man this morning?

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - ANDEROSZI'S OFFICE - CLOSEUP -  
SHAFT

66

Shaft is cool, calm, his face placid.

SHAFT  
And all I'm trying to tell you,  
Mr. Liebowitz, is, if that sonof-  
abitch wasn't dead, I would be.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - ANDEROSZI'S OFFICE - DAY -  
CLOSEUP - ANDEROSZI

67

Tired and drawn.

ANDEROSZI (impatient)  
Come on, Mike. The District Attorney's office saw the stuff these monkeys were carrying. They both have records as long as my pazoozy.  
(a beat)  
Getting rid of that bum was a public service.

ANGLE WIDENS

68

to show Assistant District Attorney Liebowitz considering both Shaft and Anderozzi for a moment, then putting away his pen and putting a yellow legal pad covered with notes in a zip-pouch carrying case.

LIEBOWITZ  
Okay, but it's still a homicide until the grand jury looks at it.  
(rising, looking at Shaft)  
Need I remind you not to go anywhere?

SHAFT (smart-ass)  
Need I assure you that I wouldn't think of it?

LIEBOWITZ (coldly)  
Yes.  
(to Anderozzi)  
I'll talk to you after we see the reports.

ANDEROSZI  
Sure, Mike. Take it easy.

Liebowitz departs with a cold glance at Shaft as Anderozzi makes notes on a desk pad. Shaft gets up, stretches out on the floor and starts doing pushups.

ANDEROSZI  
You know much about Knocks Person?

SHAFT (going up and  
down)

You putting me on, man?

(a beat)

Just because I wear a beret, live  
in the Village and walk a little  
funny don't mean I wasn't born and  
reared on that big plantation up  
yonder... Nossuh!

ANDEROZZI (interrupt-  
ing)

Never mind the bullshit. You killed  
one of his people this morning.

Shaft gets up, dusting off his hands.

SHAFT

Twenty-five! Phew!

(a beat)

So what? Big-time Knocks Persons,  
King of the Harlem Rackets. What's  
he going to do?

ANOTHER ANGLE

69

ANDEROZZI (coldly)

That's what you're going to find  
out - among other things.

SHAFT (a beat,  
uncertain)

Me? It ain't very goddamn likely  
he's going to tell me.

ANOTHER ANGLE

70

ANDEROZZI

Maybe if you ask him nice.

SHAFT

Oh, come on, Lieutenant.

ANDEROZZI (emphati-  
cally)

Unless you'd rather wait in jail  
until a good lawyer straightens  
you out with the grand jury.

EXT. 50TH STREET BETWEEN LEXINGTON AND THIRD -  
SIDEWALK - MOVING SHOTS - DAY

71

The noisy, smelly, dirty city swirls around Shaft as he emerges from the precinct and walks toward Third, looking for a phone - the one on the corner from which TWO TEENAGE WHITE GIRLS squeeze out as Shaft fishes for a coin and steps in, paying more attention to the peculiar, bent-over manner in which the girls are walking away.

INT. THIRD AND 50TH STREET - PHONE BOOTH - DAY

72

Shaft reaches for the phone, finds only the mouth-piece dangling. The metal shell and coin box are gone. He turns to look OUT OF FRAME, the direction taken by the girls, then back to the phone.

EXT. THIRD AVENUE AND 50TH STREET - SIDEWALK - DAY

73

ACROSS Shaft looking for a phone, settling on a coffee shop in the middle of the block.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CASHIER'S AREA - DAY

74

CASHIER, a twentyish fag in a blue raglan sweater, looks up with interest as Shaft approaches.

SHAFT (holding out  
quarter)  
Can you give me some change?

CASHIER (smiling  
sweetly)  
Certainly.

The cashier deposits the change in Shaft's hand with loving tenderness. Shaft looks uncomfortable as he heads for the phone in the rear of the shop, glancing back at the cashier.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - PHONE - DAY

75

Shaft, on the phone, looking at the cashier speculatively.

INT. KNOCKS PERSONS' BROWNSTONE - OFFICE - PANNING  
SHOT - DAY

76

FROM the doorway, the immense all-white chamber of  
Knocks Persons' office to Persons in a leather  
chair behind a glass desk on chrome sawhorses.  
DOLLY IN on Persons, who is sitting in profile,  
looking at nothing, smoking a cigar, just sitting.  
There is a muffled RINGING of a telephone, as we  
go in. He ignores it, but the RING goes on until  
he turns the chair and gets up to lumber toward a  
door in the wall. The RINGING is suddenly LOUDER  
as he opens it.

INT. KNOCKS PERSONS' BROWNSTONE - CLOSET - DAY

77

A pay telephone RINGING on the wall. Knocks' hand  
COMES INTO FRAME, lifts receiver, he holds it to  
his ear.

PERSONS

Wrong number...

BACK TO SHAFT

78

on the phone.

Turning away from the game he has been playing  
with the cashier.

SHAFT (abruptly)

I got the right number, you nigger  
sonofabitch. This is John Shaft  
and I hear you're looking for me.

BACK TO PERSONS

79

on the phone.

He shows no surprise or agitation, merely raises  
the cigar to puff on it.

PERSONS

I'm looking for you.



BACK TO SHAFT

80

on the phone.

SHAFT

I'm ready when you are.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CASHIER'S AREA - DAY

81

The cashier is making change for a CUSTOMER, turning to look OUT OF FRAME toward Shaft on the phone. He smiles brightly and Shaft walks INTO FRAME, starts to go by, then pauses, leaning over the stand.

SHAFT (whispering)

You know where the boathouse is in Central Park?

CASHIER (looking  
around nervously, then  
whispering)

Of course.

SHAFT

How about meeting me there at twelve-thirty tonight? No, make it one o'clock. All right?

CASHIER

One o'clock in Central Park?  
It's dangerous!

SHAFT (disappointed)

Would I let anything happen to you?

CASHIER

Well, I guess not.  
(brightening)  
One o'clock.

SHAFT (patting  
cashier's hand)

Ciao.

He turns to walk OUT OF FRAME. HOLD on cashier who takes out a comb and nervously goes after his wavy hair.

CASHIER

Ciao.

EXT. THIRD AVENUE - STREET - EVENING

82

ZOOM IN on Shaft standing in the street trying to flag a cab. He spots an empty one, waves. The driver rolls past and Shaft turns to watch.

SHAFT'S POV - THIRD AVENUE

83

The cab goes past him, then pulls in to pick up PRETTY WHITE GIRL a little farther down the block. She glances in Shaft's direction (the CAMERA) with a guilty little smile, but gets in quickly. Cab pulls away.

REVERSE ANGLE - SHAFT

84

Looking disgusted, angry, turning back to try again.

SHAFT (waving arm)  
Cab! Goddammit, cab!

INT. MCBURNEY YMCA - HEALTH CLUB - EVENING

85

A twentyish black ATTENDANT, wearing a YMCA stencilled sweatshirt looks up from an engineering textbook as Shaft enters check-in office area of YMCA Health Club, yanking at his tie, looking agitated, upset.

ATTENDANT  
There's my man.

He gets out a fresh towel and puts it on counter, turns to find Shaft's equipment basket.

ATTENDANT  
How you doin'?

SHAFT  
I don't know, man. It's been tight.

ATTENDANT  
Sweat it out, baby, sweat it out.

SHAFT  
How's school?

ATTENDANT  
Beats robbin' deli's.

85  
CONT'D  
(2)

Shaft nods, takes towel and turns away. Attendant goes back to his book.

INT. MCBURNEY YMCA - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

86

WAIST-LEVEL SHOT of Shaft stripping, the three bullet scars in his left side visible. He seems almost frantic to get out of his clothes.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MCBURNEY YMCA - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

87-93

INTO MONTAGE OF DOUBLE AND TRIPLE EXPOSURES of Shaft working out - running the track, hand over hand on an overhead ladder, dribbling a basketball across an empty court, driving his fists into a heavy bag - gasping for breath as he strains and sweats it out.

INT. ELLIE MOORE'S APARTMENT - MOVING SHOTS - NIGHT

94

Ellie flicks out kitchen light and walks into living room with brown paper bag, the trash. She flicks out an upright lamp along the way, leaving only table lamp on. CAMERA TRACKS Ellie to the door, where she juggles the bag, unhooks chain and unlocks triple bolt.

ANGLE ON DOOR

95

as she opens it. Shaft is standing there, leaning an elbow against the door frame.

SHAFT

Boo!

ELLIE (in real fright)

Oh!

She gasps for breath and drops the bag. Shaft reaches for her.

ELLIE (heart pounding)

Oh, you bastard! Oh! Don't you ever...

Shaft silences her protest with his lips on hers. In exasperation, she slams at his shoulder with a fist, her mouth tearing loose for a moment as he kicks the door shut.

95  
CONT'D  
(2)

ELLIE (fiercely)  
You're an animal! You're a god-damned animal.

Shaft is backing her into the room. Her resistance, the fright and anger are dissolving. She is returning his embrace as her body is arched against a chair in the darkest corner of the room.

# ANOTHER ANGLE

96

Her shortie nightgown hits the floor.

SHAFT  
Yeah -- and you love it.

ELLIE (murmuring)  
I love it...  
(a beat)  
Oh, I love it.

Shaft's clothes are hitting the floor too.

# INT./EXT. HARLEM - MOVING SHOTS - NIGHT

97

An impression of Harlem streets from a moving car, (the CAMERA) Amsterdam Avenue, Lenox Avenue, etc. We ROLL INTO the curb outside RAY ROBINSON'S bar. There are FIVE BLACK STUDS standing on the sidewalk talking, laughing. They notice the car and grow quiet.

# INT. KNOCKS PERSONS' MERCEDES - KNOCKS POV - NIGHT

98

ACROSS Knocks' diamond-flashing, cigar-holding hand to electrically powered window coming down as CORNER COWBOY walks to the car and bends over.

CORNER COWBOY  
(smiling)  
Hey, you lookin' good. Where you been, daddy?

There is no response from Knocks. The man's smile fades on the dying words. He looks nervous, concerned.

98  
CONT'D  
(2)

CORNER COWBOY (fer-  
vently)

Knocks, I - there ain't anybody I ain't talked to. Man, I mean nobody. And flat nothin', NOT-A-THING.

(a beat)

But I'm going to be movin' around good tonight...

The window rises on his promise.

EXT. HARLEM STREET - CORNER COWBOY - NIGHT

99

Corner Cowboy watches Knocks' Mercedes move out and turns back to his companions.

ANGLE ON CORNER COWBOY

100

CORNER COWBOY

Goddamn, that man's so close to killin' somebody I can't hardly stand to talk with him. Goddamn!

INT. ELLIE MOORE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

101

Ellie is a dim, shadowy outline of whiteness against the white bedsheets, leaning back against a pillow, smoking, an ashtray covering her navel. She is watching Shaft dress. All we see of him is a darker blur passing in front of the CAMERA at the foot of the bed.

ELLIE (softly)

I love to watch you when you get out of bed like that.

Shaft grunts, passes in front of the CAMERA. There is a RATTLING of keys and change as he pulls on his pants.

ELLIE

Will you be back?

SHAFT

Maybe, I don't know.

ELLIE (tentatively)  
John -- what is this thing you're  
involved in?

101  
CONT'D  
(2)

Shaft, in shirt and tie and trousers, moves past  
CAMERA and sits on the side of the bed facing her,  
back to CAMERA.

SHAFT  
I don't know what it is.

ANOTHER ANGLE

102

Shaft's face in the darkness.

SHAFT (continued)  
And if I did, I wouldn't tell you.

ELLIE  
That's not fair. The Seven O'clock  
News had a picture of the man and  
your office and what if...

SHAFT (interrupting)  
Easy, baby, easy. There ain't no  
what if. There's only what is.

ELLIE  
But, John --

SHAFT  
And that's all there is -- what's  
here and now. What if is a dead  
Chinaman who put three holes in me  
in Nam before he got taken out --  
or the cat who went out the window  
instead of me -- or a hundred other  
things any day, any place. Screw  
that what if stuff. I got to go.

And he goes -- as we HOLD on Ellie's eyes. TRACKING  
Shaft OUT OF FRAME.

INT. SHAFT'S OFFICE - LOW ANGLE - PERSONS - NIGHT

103

Shaft's POV of Persons standing in front of the desk.

ANGLE WIDENS

104

to include Shaft, more poised to respond to this presence than surprised. They assess each other silently.

PERSONS

I came up here to ask you to do a job for me.

Shaft relaxes slightly.

SHAFT

You can get it done cheaper by the kind you sent after me.

PERSONS

No, I need you.

SHAFT

Then why in the hell don't you just tell me what's so important about it.

ANGLE ON PERSONS

105

PERSONS

My baby's gone -- and maybe you could get her back.

ANGLE WIDENS

106

To Shaft, not sure he's hearing right.

SHAFT

Baby?

PERSONS

My little girl. My daughter. She's been gone near two weeks now. And I got to know where.

SHAFT

You go to the cops for that -- they got a bureau. That's all they do is look for missing girls.

Knocks just looks at him.

SHAFT (a beat; thinking)

No, I guess you don't go anywhere near the police, do you? Even for your daughter.

Shaft gets up and looks out the window a moment.

106  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT (turning)

Well, you don't come to me, either.  
I'm not a mob punk. I've got enough  
work and a standing to pro --

KNOCKS (interrupting)

Mr. Shaft, maybe you think I should  
just go on my way because the things  
I do -- the way I live -- ain't the  
police way or your way or anybody's  
but my own and the people who buy  
what I got to sell. That's all right.  
You think what you want. But I'm not  
here because of any of that. I'm  
here like any other man who's girl  
is missing.

ANOTHER ANGLE

107

SHAFT

But what the hell do you want with  
me? Just because I'm black?

PERSONS

You black, Mister Shaft -- but more  
because you also half-white now and  
you go places where my people can't  
go, where I don't go. You do. You're  
one of the new ones. You part of both  
worlds. And that's where you got to  
look.

It's Shaft's turn to just stare.

ANGLE ON SHAFT

108

He leans across desk toward Persons (CAMERA).

SHAFT

I get twelve-fifty an hour and  
expenses. I get a retainer of  
a couple hundred to get me started.  
If I have to rent a car or buy some  
information, I do it -- and bill  
you for it. At the end of the day,  
I'll report to you on what I've  
learned, if anything. And when the

(continued)



SHAFT (continued)  
 case is over, I'll account for  
 all the time, all the money and  
 all the information.

108  
 CONT'D  
 (2)

ANGLE WIDENS

109

SHAFT  
 And one more thing. I'm an  
 investigator, not an errand boy.  
 You'll get exactly what you pay  
 for the same as any other client  
 who comes in that door.  
 (beat)  
 But if you ever send anybody after  
 me with a gun again, I'll kill the  
 motherfucker -- and find a way to  
 get to you.

ANGLE ON PERSONS

110

As he takes the brown envelope out of his coat and  
 throws it on Shaft's desk.

PERSONS  
 When that's gone, I'll get you  
 some more.

CLOSEUP - PERSONS

111

His eyes are brimming with tears.

PERSONS  
 Just get my baby back.

EXT. 42ND STREET HOT DOG STAND -- SIDEWALK COUNTER - 112  
 CLOSEUP SHAFT - NIGHT

Shaft's face FILLS HALF THE FRAME IN CLOSEUP as he  
 takes a huge bite of a sauerkraut-and-mustard-laden  
 hot dog, munches. His head is framed in the glare  
 of the theater marquees, neon and flashing car lights.  
 As Shaft chews, Anderozzi's face appears in the near  
 b.g. Anderozzi speaks to the o.s. PUERTO RICAN COUNTER-  
 MAN. The words are indistinguishable in the traffic  
 SOUNDS. Anderozzi nods and reaches forward, then comes  
 back with an orange juice, which he sips through a  
 straw, looking at the back of Shaft's head.

ANDEROZZI

Those things will turn you into  
a big black balloon full of  
heartburn.

112  
CONT'D  
(2)

Shaft looks down and SCREEN LEFT but does not turn  
around.

SHAFT

That against the law?

ANDEROZZI

Only the laws of nature.  
(a beat as he sips)  
Carry a little sign warning  
people not to light any matches  
around you.

ANOTHER ANGLE

113

Shaft has turned and, facing Anderozzi, rubs his  
stomach and pulls up his belt over the leaden  
weight of hot dogs.

ANDEROZZI

What did he want?

SHAFT

Who?

ANDEROZZI

Your visitor from Harlem.

Shaft looks puzzled, trying to remember. A light  
of recollection.

SHAFT

Oh, him. Oh, yeah. Old Knocks said  
he wanted to be a Big Brother in the  
Police Athletic League this year --  
and you cats wouldn't let him in.  
Got this great program. Monday nights,  
they all go to a crap game. Tuesday  
they tour the after-hours spots.  
Thursday, everybody gets to pick a  
free number for a policy bet. Yeah,  
and...

ANDEROZZI

You were going to give me a call,  
remember?

SHAFT  
Tell me how I do it if I'm back  
there in the office and you're  
walking  
(he waves at 42nd Street)  
in this open sewer.

113  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANDEROZZI  
What did Persons want?

SHAFT (a beat)  
He wanted to come in like any other  
client -- and retain my services in  
a personal matter.

ANOTHER ANGLE

114

To include Puerto Rican counterman looking back  
and forth to Shaft and Anderozzi as they talk.

ANDEROZZI  
He has a funny way of doing it.

SHAFT  
Maybe he doesn't know any other way.  
(a beat)  
Listen, I gotta run uptown and see  
my mother. Pay the man -- I'll  
catch you later.

ANGLE ON ANDEROZZI AND THE COUNTERMAN

115

As Shaft turns away.

ANDEROZZI  
How much?

COUNTERMAN  
Dollar eighty for him, thirty-five  
for you.

ANDEROZZI  
A dollar eighty?

COUNTERMAN  
Five dogs and two root beer.

Anderozzi looks o.s. after Shaft, digs for money.  
He's been had.

INT. ANDEROZZI'S CAR - FRONT SEAT - ANDEROZZI AND  
HANNON - NIGHT

116

Hannon is at the wheel as Anderozzi gets in.

HANNON

Where's he goin'?

ANDEROZZI

He says to visit his mother.

HANNON

She's in for a lousy surprise at  
this hour.

ANGLE ON ANDEROZZI

117

As he glances OUT OF FRAME to Hannon.

ANDEROZZI

Somebody is. The crazy bastard  
doesn't have a mother.

INT. HARLEM TENEMENT - BEN BUFORD'S HIDEOUT -  
PANNING SHOTS - NIGHT

118

INTO the glare of a naked overhead light. CAMERA  
PULLS OUT of the glare as we begin to hear business-  
like, quiet voices of o.s. men.

BEN BUFORD'S VOICE

Listen, when you see Billy Rich in  
Bogalusa, tell him I tried to get  
him on the phone three-four times.  
He's got to stay in touch. Lay it  
on him.

CAMERA PANS DOWN to wood kitchen table under the  
light in a small, scabrous tenement room. Standing  
around the table are Buford, LONNIE DOTTS, PRESTON  
PEERCE, BEYMAN NEWFIELD, all in their mid-twenties,  
in well-tailored mod suits, and ASA PETTIFORD, a  
twentyish student-looking black in sports jacket  
and slacks, white shirt and tie, a tight, ordinary  
haircut. Dotts, Pearce and Newfield are packing  
money into envelopes and fitting them into a cheap,  
plain-print suitcase.

## ANGLE WIDENS

and we can see the discarded shopping bags on the floor.

ASA PETTIFORD

That Billy, sometimes he won't listen so good.

DOTTS (stuffing last  
of the envelopes)  
Man, then you don't give him the bread, that's all.

ASA PETTIFORD

Yeah, but...

BEN BUFORD (interrupting)

No goddamn butts, man. I go out and maybe get myself killed to raise that kind of money, then you tell Billy Rich he can follow instructions.

PEERCE (closing lid  
on suitcase -- voice of  
reason)

It's like Ben says, Asa, we all move together or we don't move at all.

Asa Pettiford takes suitcase, prepares to leave.

ASA PETTIFORD

Yeah, I know that and you know that, but this cat Billy Rich, he don't know any of it.

BUFORD

Then you make him know.

ASA

Okay, Ben. I'll try. You know that.

BUFORD

I know that.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

As Pettiford takes the suitcase to leave. Beyman Newfield opens the door for him and closes it behind the messenger.

NEWFIELD (beat)  
I don't think he can handle something like that, Ben.

120  
CONT'D  
(2)

The others are taking seats around the table. A board meeting, with Buford as chairman.

BUFORD  
Yeah, I know.  
(a beat -- thinking)  
We're way ahead if he gets the money around without some redneck sheriff or the FBI getting on his ass.

DOTTS  
What'd the lawyer say, Ben?

ANGLE ON BUFORD AND DOTTS

121

BUFORD  
Wants me to get down there and go to court.

DOTTS  
You goin'?

BUFORD  
Not if I can help it.

DOTTS (enthusiastically)  
Hell, Ben, you could do eight or ten campuses on the way down.

ANGLE WIDENS

122

PEERCE  
They'd know you was comin'. The whole world would know it.

BUFORD (derisively)  
Yeah? The whole world would know I'm doing twenty years if that Mississippi judge gets his hands on me, too.

(a beat)  
Then what?  
(he looks, one by one, to the others)  
You gonna run it? You? You?

They respond almost simultaneously, words and phrases overlapping.

122  
CONT'D  
(2)

DOTTS

Hey, man, nothing like that.

PEERCE

You're The Man, Ben. You got to do it.

NEWFIELD

No, Ben, you got it all together.

They have passed the small test. Buford looks confident, in control.

EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - CURB - ANDEROZZI'S CAR -  
TRACKING SHOTS - NIGHT

123

The unmarked detective car pulls into the curb, Hannon at the wheel. Anderozzi emerges and moves quickly up the stairs. A UNIFORMED LIEUTENANT is coming down stairs with a UNIFORMED PATROLMAN. They nod.

LIEUTENANT

Hello, Vic.

ANDEROZZI

Charlie. How are ya?

LIEUTENANT (gesturing  
to building with thumb)  
What the hell is he doing here in  
the middle of the night?

ANDEROZZI

Christ knows.

Anderozzi shakes his head and keeps moving up the steps, CAMERA TRACKING him to and through the doors.

INT. POLICE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE - CLOSEUP COM-  
MISSIONER - NIGHT

124

The POLICE COMMISSIONER'S face fills the FRAME -- round, red and angry -- and we see he is fiftyish, balding, fattening, wearying.

COMMISSIONER (strongly)  
That goddamned ballet dancer of  
a mayor went to a party last night -  
somebody told him that Harlem  
would be in flames next week...

(sarcastic)

His friend in Albany will send the  
National Guard down the Hudson on  
gunboats to take over...and  
goddammit,

(he has slammed his  
hand down on the desk)  
he picks up the phone and says he  
wants a report on his desk when  
he gets there at 9:30.

ANGLE WIDENS TO SYLVIA FOREST

125

a dark mid-thirtyish and attractive woman stand-  
ing beside the desk while Anderozzi is sitting  
opposite Commissioner.

SYLVIA (reaching  
for heavy white mug on  
the Commissioner's desk)  
Would you like more coffee?

COMMISSIONER  
Yes, please.

SYLVIA (leaving)  
Lieutenant?

ANDEROZZI (smiling)  
Black. No sugar.  
(to Commissioner)  
What are you going to tell him?

COMMISSIONER  
What are you going to tell me?

ANDEROZZI  
Do you want to hear what I know -  
or what I think?

COMMISSIONER (pausing  
to calm down)  
Both, Vic.

Sylvia Forest re-enters with coffee, puts mug on  
coasters in front of each man and leaves again.



ANDEROZZI

Okay, first I think it's a racket rumble, not a race thing. Knocks Persons is in it. We don't know how or why, yet. But enough to bring him down out of Harlem to see John Shaft and apparently ask for help.

125  
CONT'D  
(2)

COMMISSIONER

That's the spade private eye friend of yours.

ANDEROZZI

That's the spade private eye I happen to know.

ANOTHER ANGLE

126

The Commissioner swivels around in his chair, gets up and walks the floor. A worried, frustrated man.

COMMISSIONER

I'd like to have the tactical units go from one end of this town to the other, picking up every gun they could find.

ANDEROZZI

They'd never come back -  
(beat)  
and then you would have tanks rolling up Park Avenue.

EXT. AMSTERDAM AVENUE - STREET - TRACKING SHOTS -  
NIGHT

127

A LONG SHOT of MORRIS FLEISCHER'S CAB coming through the lonely, empty darkness slowly approaching a row of tenements - slatternly old buildings, many of the windows covered with tin or boards. The cab finds a place near curb.

INT. FLEISCHER'S CAB - FRONT SEAT - NIGHT

128

Fleischer, a thin, sixtyish man, slips off his Bulova and hides it under the seat. He looks

exhausted and terrified. When cab stops, he lowers his head in silent prayer and turns to look at his passenger.

128  
CONT'D  
(2)

FLEISCHER'S POV - SHAFT

129

Shaft is sleeping in the corner.

FLEISCHER

Please, Mister. You want to sleep, go get a nice hotel room.

SHAFT (blinking,  
looking out)  
What's this?

FLEISCHER

The address you gimme on Amsterdam.

SHAFT (a beat)

Okay.

He begins to unfold from his slumbering position.

EXT. AMSTERDAM AVENUE - SIDEWALK - PANNING SHOTS - NIGHT

130

The cab pulls away quickly leaving Shaft on the curb, looking at the tenements across the street. He looks at buildings and CAMERA PANS to them and inspects them from SHAFT'S POV as we -

ZOOM INTO shadows of building on left and FREEZE FRAME on black-jacketed MALE FIGURE lurking there. We HOLD the image for a flicker, then ZOOM BACK TO PANNING of building until CAMERA ZOOMS INTO shadows of building on right to FREEZE FRAME on SECOND MALE FIGURE in shadows.

EXT. HARLEM TENEMENTS - STREET - NIGHT

131

From tenement steps of Shaft coming across street, looking straight ahead, unconcerned, lighting a cigarette.

INT. TENEMENT - STAIRWELL - TRACKING SHOT - NIGHT

132

CAMERA FOLLOWS Shaft up the almost-invisible stairs and GROPEs with him. There is a single bulb shining some place in the building but we get only a remote touch of its illumination. CAMERA SEES Shaft's foot disappear through missing stair board and he stumbles and curses.

SHAFT (mumbling)  
Goddammit...burn the whole stinking  
pile down...live like animals...

INT. TENEMENT - DOORWAY - SHAFT'S POV

133

ACROSS AND OVER Shaft's shoulder to a battered, blue door. Shaft raises a hand to give it a hard whack, hesitates, and knocks very politely - rap-rap - with a knuckle. There is a long pause, silence. He raps again.

BUFORD'S VOICE (behind  
the door)  
Who is it?

SHAFT  
Shaft. John Shaft, Ben.

Another silent pause and the door opens with Newfield on the knob, Buford, Peerce and Dotts in the b.g., standing. Buford looks angry, the others suspicious.

SHAFT (brightly)  
Hey, Ben. How you doin', baby?

REVERSE ANGLE - BUFORD'S POV

134

With smiles and waves, Shaft comes into the room, forcing Newfield to get out of the way. He extends a hand to Buford (THE CAMERA) as he passes through the gantlet of hostility.

SHAFT (still  
smiling)  
What you been up to, man?  
(looking around room)  
Nice place you got here.

## ANGLE ON BUFORD AND SHAFT

135

Buford reluctantly takes Shaft's hand.

BUFORD

What the hell do you want?

(beat)

And how the hell did you get here?

SHAFT

Come on, Ben. It's all cool.

(beat)

Just called your mama to say I  
had a little business proposition  
for my ol' buddy Ben and...

## ANGLE WIDENS

136

to take in Dotts and Peerce.

DOTTS (interrupting)

Who is this pimp, Ben?

Shaft's jollity drops away instantly.

SHAFT (to Dotts)

Watch your mouth, mother-fucker,  
or I'll tear it out of your head.

BUFORD (angrily)

He doesn't have to watch anything  
except you getting the hell out  
of here.

SHAFT

Wait a minute. I came up here to  
buy some help in finding a little  
girl who's missing - from the  
people I figured know what's going  
on.

(a beat)

And that's all I want.

## INT. BUFORD'S HIDEOUT - CLOSE-UP DOOR

137

The door bursts open violently and FRAME FILLS with  
the alarmed and screaming face of SONNY GILLIAN,  
one of the shadow figures from the street.

GILLIAN (shouting)  
They're coming in. They're coming  
after you!

137  
CONT'D  
(2)

The sentences are punctuated by two rifle shots,  
answered almost instantly by the firing of a machine-  
gun on the first floor of the building.

BUFORD  
Who is it?

GILLIAN  
I don't know. Run. Get out of  
here!

SHAFT  
Where's the guns?

PEERCE  
Ain't no guns here.

SHAFT  
Shit!

He pushes Gillian out the door.

SHAFT (cont'd.)  
Get down there!

He spins around and runs to window. There's no way  
down.

DOTTS  
The roof. Up to the roof.

Buford nods and Pearce, Dotts and Newfield scramble  
for the door.

SHAFT  
Ben! Wait.

Buford stops. Shaft grabs him by the wrist. The  
others keep going.

SHAFT  
Not the roof.  
(a beat)  
Come on!

INT. TENEMENT - STAIRWELL LANDING - NIGHT

138

Shaft is dragging, pulling and pushing Ben toward  
the stairs - as rifles and machineguns continue to  
roar o.s.

BUFORD (struggling)  
You're taking me down there to be  
killed! No!

138  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT (still  
pulling)  
Goddammit, come on! The roof's  
wide open. We've got to...

BUFORD  
No! You brought the CIA here to  
kill me!

# ANOTHER ANGLE - SHAFT AND BUFORD

139

As Shaft lets go of Buford and drives his fist  
eight or ten inches to the point of Buford's chin.  
The force of the blow lifts Buford up, then he  
collapses forward and Shaft catches him over his  
shoulder, turns and begins the decent down the  
stairs, toward the firing.

# EXT. HARLEM TENEMENT - ROOFTOP - PANNING SHOTS - NIGHT

140

The half-moon darkness of four A.M. covers Harlem  
in a blue-black shroud as CAMERA PANS through  
foliage of TV antennas, roof-exit doorways, parapets,  
miscellaneous wires and laundry lines to the dim  
outlines of a rooftop door. SOUNDS of gun battle  
below echo sporadically.

# ANGLE NARROWS

141

as the door BURSTS OPEN and Lonnie Dotts, Preston  
Peerce, Beyman Newfield - scramble out. They are  
dimly backlit by the hallway behind them. They  
are barely out the door as two machineguns open  
fire in extremely loud triplet bursts, one from the  
left, the other from the CAMERA.

# EXT. HARLEM TENEMENT - ROOFTOP - FULL FIGURE CLOSE-UP - LONNIE DOTTS - NIGHT

142

The slugs rip across Dotts' chest and hurl him up  
against the door.

## CLOSE-UP OF PEERCE

143

who takes the bullets in the head and crumples into a ball that is hurtled against a TV antenna.

## CLOSE-UP OF NEWFIELD

144

who doubles up and staggers drunkenly toward the blazing machinegun of the CAMERA, spins a full circle on his ankles and sprawls out toward us, one hand holding his shattered body, the other stretched out in supplication as he hits the rooftop like a falling tree. We FOLLOW HIM DOWN.

## INT. TENEMENT - HALLWAY - MOVING SHOTS - NIGHT

145

Running feet in highly polished shoes come up the stairs, down the hallway and suddenly stop at a partially open door. One of the feet kicks open door and CAMERA PANS SWIFTLY up to look into the room. We see a machinegun muzzle, pointing from the doorway. In the dim light of a small lamp beside a sway-backed bed is a fiftyish BLACK WOMAN in a pink nightgown, cringing in terror while the tattered blanket covers the bottom of the bed and trails to the floor. CAMERA HOLDS on the woman as the gun muzzle leaves FRAME and we hear the feet run off and down the stairs. Woman on bed is making small keening noises as CAMERA DOLLIES INTO ROOM. As we go in, a corner of the blanket is raised from the floor and Shaft peers out, then crawls from under bed. His suit catches on loose bedspring and tears near shoulder.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

146

as Shaft pulls Buford to his feet and brings him out of the daze. Buford struggles slightly.

## SHAFT

Stop that. We got to move  
if you want to stay alive.

Shaft jams his hand in his pocket, comes out with a small wad of bills and drops them in the lap of the woman on the bed, then pushes Buford out of the room.

INT./EXT. TENEMENT - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

147

ACROSS SHAFT AND BUFORD trying to become part of the wall, as they look out the bullet-shattered and torn entrance to the empty street.

SHAFT

Man, I hope you still know how to run.

(beat)

Stay with me!

ANGLE WIDENS

148

as he leaps away and hurtles down the steps to the street, racing off on the first bounce, and followed with equal swiftness by Buford. CAMERA HOLDS on the emptiness a beat as we HEAR an o.s. SIREN begin to wail, then PANS DOWN to the floor of the vestibule and the crumpled body of Gillian, rifle across his chest.

EXT. HARLEM STREETS - SIDEWALK - MOVING SHOTS - NIGHT 149

Shaft and Buford running like hell, crouched low, from car to car, doorway to doorway, then sprinting. We HEAR a SIREN and they leap into a doorway.

EXT. HARLEM STREET - DOORWAY - CLOSE-UP SHAFT,  
BUFORD

150

Tight against the wall, eyes on the street, Shaft is breathing hard and Buford is breathing harder. Siren goes by and red light flashes on their faces.

SHAFT

You're sucking wind like a fat old man. Gonna lead the revolution in a wheelchair?

He dashes out before Buford can answer and Buford follows.

EXT. BROADWAY CORNER - SUBWAY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

151

Shaft dashes up and begins to go down stairs, Buford following. Shaft stops, turns.



## ANGLE ON SHAFT

152

SHAFT (breathlessly)  
I'm going to take you to some  
friends of mine I can trust.  
They're nice people. You make  
one fucking remark about that  
Uncle Tom shit to them and I'll  
break both your legs.

INT. POLICE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE - ANDEROZZI -  
PANNING SHOTS - NIGHT

153

ACROSS Commissioner's profile and desk, which holds  
a bright red phone in addition to regular black  
instrument, to Anderozzi.

ANDEROZZI

As far as that's concerned, every-  
body in New York has got a gun -  
in toilet tanks, in the walls, under  
the mattresses, buried in window  
boxes, drip trays of refrigerators -  
(a beat)

It's an armed camp. But on our side  
is the fact that hardly anybody  
knows what to do with them. It takes  
months to turn an angry man into a  
professional who can -

The red phone buzzes and a small red light on it  
blinks. The Commissioner's hand flashes out to it.

COMMISSIONER

Yes!

The o.s. VOICE on the phone is a meaningless jumble  
as we

SLOW DISSOLVE INTO

EXT. AMSTERDAM AVENUE - SIDEWALK - ZOOM SHOT -  
NIGHT

154

The street swarms with UNIFORMED POLICE. There are  
four squad cars and two police ambulances at the  
curb. TWO OFFICERS are carrying body from building  
entrance on stretchers as we -

ZOOM IN on Anderozzi and the Commissioner on steps,  
moving aside to let stretcher-bearers pass.

154  
CONT'D  
(2)

COMMISSIONER (glancing  
OUT OF FRAME at passing body)  
That's four - all black.

ANDEROZZI  
All on the same side.

The Commissioner looks at Anderozzi quizzically.

ANDEROZZI (cont'd.)  
Whoever it was, came in from the  
street - There's no blood on the  
sidewalk.

COMMISSIONER  
Let's take a look - We'll have to  
go over to Gracie Mansion.

ANGLE WIDENS

155

and they turn to go into the building. Another  
stretcher comes out.

INT. MARVIN GREEN'S APARTMENT - CHILDREN'S BEDROOM -  
PANNING SHOTS - DAY

156

CAMERA PANS through a clutter of toys and games in  
what is obviously a child's room, past shade-drawn  
window on which late-morning sun glows, to the foot  
of a child's bed, where Shaft's large foot protrudes  
through rumpled sheets and blankets. HOLD on foot  
a moment, then go on to the rest of Shaft crowded  
onto the small, bunk bed. When we get to his face  
we see his eyes are open, staring. PAN ACROSS ROOM  
to identical bed, where Ben Buford is sleeping in  
similar cramped circumstances.

ANGLE WIDENS

157

as Shaft's hand ENTERS FRAME to remove pair of  
trousers from chairback.

INT. MARVIN GREEN'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

158

Shaft looks at himself in the mirror, sticks out his tongue, splashes cold water on his face. He looks at four toothbrushes. There are two adult brushes, two children's. He reaches, hesitates, then chooses the least scruffy of the children's brushes.

INT. MARVIN GREEN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

159

HELEN GREEN, a thirtyish attractive black is at the sink cleaning up breakfast dishes, back to the CAMERA, humming with radio on a shelf. She finishes rinsing dishes and turns off tap.

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE SHAFT

160

who has come into the kitchen and is standing near the stove, stretching. He's wearing trousers, but no shirt and he's barefoot. She turns and watches muscles ripple.

HELEN

You shouldn't do that to a grown woman this early in the day.

Shaft breaks up as she heads for the stove to pour coffee for them both.

SHAFT (taking cup)

Shee-yut. Marvin ever catch us, he'd just jigger my tax forms so I never got out of Danbury jail. I need the accountant more'n I need another good-looking woman.

He carries coffee to dinette table.

SHAFT (continuing;

larking)

Although you are a mightee fine temptation.

ANOTHER ANGLE

161

Helen sits down to make out a shopping list with a stub of a child's crayon, Shaft sipping coffee, watching her.

SHAFT  
That what they taught you at  
Vassar?

161  
CONT'D  
(2)

HELEN (looking up)  
Hmm? What's that?

SHAFT  
That language you're writing in.  
Skip. Pean But . . . Fab Deterg . . .  
Two Ell B's Broc.

HELEN  
How would you like this cup of  
coffee over your head?

SHAFT  
Uh - no thank you, ma'am.

Shaft gets up, goes to stove for more coffee. Helen  
TRACKS him with her eyes.

HELEN  
John -- who were they trying to  
kill? You or him?

SHAFT  
I don't know...  
(beat)  
But there wasn't enough killing.

HELEN (real horror)  
John! Five boys were -- were  
slaughtered.

ANGLE ON SHAFT

162

SHAFT  
Yeah! Should've been five more,  
too -- of whoever was doin' it.  
One for one, goddammit.

HELEN  
That's insane, John, barbaric.  
Murder doesn't stop murder.

SHAFT

Well, shit, Helen, if we're going to fight a revolution, if we're going to start waving guns around, why in the name of hell doesn't somebody learn how to use the goddam things? Nowhere in the world should five black men die without taking five more with them.

In the silence that follows, Buford comes into doorway of kitchen looking sleepy, barely conscious.

SHAFT (to Buford)

Ain't that right, sunshine?

Buford ignores him. Helen gets up and gets cup for Buford.

HELEN (to Buford)

Sit down and have some coffee.

SHAFT

What time is Marvin coming home?

Buford sits at dinette table, Helen brings him coffee.

HELEN

Five-thirty. Six maybe.

She puts her hand on Ben's shoulder.

HELEN (to Buford)

Do you take cream? Sugar?

He shakes his head in the negative and sips.

HELEN

I'll talk to him about one or two.

SHAFT

Tell him not to change his schedule or hurry.

HELEN (alarmed)

Why? What do you mean?

SHAFT

Nothing. We're going to be here, that's all.

(a beat)

Uh -- nobody's coming up here to shoot anybody. Him or me.

(he smiles)

That right, Ben?

Buford looks at Shaft coldly.

162  
CONT'D  
(2)

BUFORD

You know more about that than I  
do -- right now.

Shaft is picking up phone off kitchen counter,  
gathering long extension cord with it and walking  
out of room.

SHAFT (nodding)

Yeah. You're right.

INT. POLICE COMMISSIONER'S CAR - BACK SEAT - DAY

163

Anderozzi and the Commissioner are riding North on  
the East River Drive, both glum and weary.

COMMISSIONER (angrily)

Five dead! Five dead! And all  
there is, is a bushel basket of  
.45 caliber casings and three  
people who thought it was auto-  
mobiles back-firing! Doesn't any-  
body look out the goddamned window  
anymore? It used to be, everybody  
in New York sat looking out the  
window. It was the greatest force  
in crime prevention and detection  
since the invention...

The car phone buzzes.

COMMISSIONER (cont'd. -

reaching for the phone)

...of the electric chair.

(into phone)

Yes?

INT. MARVIN GREEN'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - CLOSE-UP -  
SHAFT - DAY

164

Shaft is walking from kitchen, holding phone with  
an extra-long extension cord.

SHAFT (mock Barbados  
accent)

John Shaft here. Put Lieutenant  
Anderozzi on the phone, will you,  
old fellow?

INT. COMMISSIONER'S CAR - BACK SEAT - DAY

165

The Commissioner, flashing anger, hands the phone to Anderozzi.

COMMISSIONER

Shaft! -- tell that sonofabitch  
I'm not your secretary.

ANDEROZZI (into phone)

The Commissioner says he's not my  
secretary -- and you're a sonofabitch.

BACK TO SHAFT

166

on the phone.

SHAFT (smiling

broadly)

He'll love me when he gets to know  
me -- those firecrackers on Amsterdam  
hurt his ears, I bet.

BACK TO ANDEROZZI

167

on the phone.

He glances at the Commissioner.

ANDEROZZI

You might say that.

SHAFT'S VOICE (o.s.

from phone)

Well, who set them off.

ANDEROZZI (coldly)

I don't know. The ballistics people  
say all the damage was done by forty-  
fives. Nobody saw anything. And  
that's it. What about you?

BACK TO SHAFT

168

on the phone.

SHAFT

I was too busy running to ask for  
an introduction.

BACK TO ANDEROZZI

169

on the phone.

ANDEROZZI

Do you know where Ben Buford is?

The phone has gone dead. Anderozzi leans forward and puts it back in the cradle.

INT. MARVIN GREEN'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - HELEN  
AND BEN - DAY

170

Helen and Ben are at the table as Shaft comes in from hallway, putting phone back on kitchen counter. He looks to Ben, with disdain, then to Helen, with amusement, as Ben and Helen argue.

BUFORD

But if you don't get involved --  
if the middle class black tries to  
disappear into the white society,  
he is lost and we remain second-  
class citizens forever.

HELEN (fervidly)

But I'm not a second-class citizen.  
We worked -- my husband worked --  
to achieve this. Maybe it's middle-  
class, but that's our identity.

BUFORD (adamantly,  
strongly)

Sister, your identity is black,  
black, black -- and don't you forget  
it. When all hell breaks loose, the  
white radical can get a haircut,  
shave his beard, put on a Brooks  
Brothers suit and hide in the crowd.  
But you and me and the rest of us can  
never take off our skins. That's  
the inescapable identity. And we'll  
be free together or we'll die together.

Shaft is shaking his head at the futility of the argument and interrupts it as Helen starts to reply.

SHAFT

What's for supper?



HELEN  
Steak.  
(a beat)  
How do you like it?

170  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT (glancing at  
Buford)  
Dipped in flour and fried.

HELEN  
Ugh!

She looks back to Buford, questioningly.

BUFORD (glancing  
at Shaft)  
Broiled, if it's not too much  
trouble.

EXT. RIVERDALE APARTMENT COMPLEX -- BUILDING AND  
STREET - MOVING SHOTS - NIGHT

171

Through the windshield of Knocks Persons' Mercedes  
limo as it oozes through apartment-crowded Bronxville --  
until we reach the rear exit area of one of the build-  
ings. The Mercedes slows and two figures emerge from  
the building, moving quickly toward the car.

INT. KNOCKS PERSONS' LIMO - BACK SEAT

172

ACROSS Shaft in profile to Buford.

BUFORD (looking around  
nervously)  
I want to get somewhere I can call  
my people to deal with this.

SHAFT  
We're All your people, brother.  
(beat)  
You speak any Spanish?

BUFORD  
A little -- why?

## ANGLE ON SHAFT

173

He looks to OUT-OF-FRAME Buford.

SHAFT (dead serious)

If all that iron came from the CIA  
or somebody like that, you better  
learn -- and go hide your ass in Cuba.

(beat)

But if it's who I think it was,  
then we're going to stay right here  
and fix it. You and me together --  
brother.

## EXT. MACDOUGAL STREET - ELLIE MOORE'S BOUTIQUE

174

THROUGH jumble of rings, beads, peace symbols, water pipes into store. A partially-obstructed and blurred-view of small counter, THREE OR FOUR HIPPIE TYPES, MALE AND FEMALE, moving back and forth, looking at items until we see Ellie Moore behind the counter. She is wearing rings on all her fingers. As she deals with hippie-type customers, Anderozzi ENTERS FRAME, leans on counter. We cannot hear their conversation although the night is filled with the sound of voices, traffic, even juke box MUSIC -- the real noises of MacDougal, as Anderozzi leans on the counter. The Hippies look at him with disdain. He smiles at them -- a cop smile that promises to see them in jail. Ellie turns toward Anderozzi smiling, asking if she can help. Her smile fades when he speaks. She shakes her head in the negative. She doesn't know where Shaft is.

## INT. ELLIE MOORE'S BOUTIQUE - ELLIE AND ANDEROZZI - NIGHT

175

ELLIE

Lieutenant, I'm tired and I'm going  
to go home.

(a beat)

Obviously without Mr. Shaft.

ANDEROZZI (grimacing)

If he does get in touch with you,  
will you please have him call us,  
Miss Moore?

(a beat)

It's important that we maintain  
contact -- for his sake, as well  
as ours.

ELLIE  
I'll do exactly what John thinks I  
should -- for his sake as well as  
yours.

175  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANDEROZZI (walking  
to door)  
Sure.  
(a beat)  
But if he's got some crazy idea  
that --  
(looking at her)  
Forget it. I'm sorry if we  
bothered you, Miss Moore.

ELLIE  
No need to apologize, Lieutenant.  
I'm a white girl with a black lover  
and this is Eighteen-sixty-five.

ANDEROZZI (hand on  
door, opening it)  
And I'm a tired cop who wishes he  
was a chicken farmer in the south  
of New Jersey. Goodnight.

HOLD on Ellie as the door closes.

INT. THOMPSON STREET APARTMENT -- CARMEN CORELLI'S  
ROOM

176

THROUGH a forest of legs to Carmen, nude, rolling  
off the bed laughing, leaving Beatrice sprawled there,  
pulling the blanket over her body. Carmen's legs be-  
come part of the forest as he pulls on his pants.

The other legs belong to CHARLES CORELLI, who will be  
described later, and PATSY DIANETTO who also will be  
described. They have been watching.

CARMEN (pulling  
on pants)  
Jesus, what a hump -- She's got a  
box like a -- a -- cement mixer.

There is some locker-room snorting of appreciation.

CHARLES  
You're gonna wear it out, dummy.

PATSY  
And he ain't got much to wear out,  
either.

More snorting.

176  
CONT'D  
(2)

CARMEN  
Yeah? I got --

CHARLES  
Come on. Enough screwing around.  
You got the beat?

CARMEN  
Yeah.

CHARLES  
You all clear on this? You slow  
him up and then you get right back  
here.

CARMEN  
Yeah. Yeah.

PATSY (fiercely)  
I'd like to kill the sonofabitch.

CHARLES  
Never mind that shit. You understand?

PATSY  
Yeah. Yeah.

CARMEN  
Okay. Sure.  
(to Beatrice)  
Get y'self cleaned up, kid.  
(leering)  
We won't be gone long.

EXT. PERSONS' BROWNSTONE -- OFFICE ENTRANCE -- NIGHT 177

Shaft and Buford going through the door into Knocks  
Persons' all-white office. Knocks is in his big white  
leather chair.

REVERSE ANGLE - PERSONS' POV

178

of them coming down the rug to two chairs in front  
of desk. Shaft sits down in chair SCREEN LEFT and  
Buford, following Shaft's glance, takes the other.

SHAFT (to Buford,  
who glances at o.s. Persons)  
This is the man who'd sell his  
daughter to a towel boy in a whore-  
house for thirty cents.

178  
CONT'D  
(2)

(looking to Persons, but  
indicating Buford)  
And this is the sonofabitch who  
could help me get her back, but  
won't.

BUFORD (leaping up)  
You pimp cocksucker!

INT. KNOCKS PERSONS' OFFICE - BUFORD, SHAFT,  
PERSONS - HAND-HELD CAMERA SHOTS - NIGHT

179

Buford hurls himself on Shaft like an angry tiger,  
his first blow catching Shaft on the side of the head  
and knocking him out of the chair. They go over with  
a crash, a wild ANGLE of flying fists and feet. Buford  
is in a frenzy of rage. Shaft is fighting, but mostly  
to keep himself from being killed.

ANGLE ON PERSONS

180

He's sitting calmly, puffing on his cigar, watching  
the dogfight on the rug just beyond his desk. He  
listens to the grunts, curses and thuds of fists on  
flesh, then rises heavily and begins to move around  
the desk.

SHAFT AND BUFORD

181

Buford trying to get his hands on Shaft's throat,  
both of them kneeing and gouging in gutter style.

ANGLE ON BUFORD

182

As Persons' huge hands grab him and lift him off  
Shaft, then hold him spitting and kicking while  
Shaft rises, straightening his clothes as much as  
possible.

BUFORD  
I'll kill you, goddamn you.  
I'll kill you!

## ANGLE ON SHAFT - BUFORD'S POV

183

He looks at them contemptuously.

## SHAFT

I'm going to get the fuck out of here and let you two fools eat each other.

(leveling finger at Buford)

You, you son of...of...a...bitch are the biggest goddamn phony in the world. Revolution, my ass. You just found something to do besides go to jail for being stupid. Four o'clock this morning some cats came around to show you how much you didn't know - and five of your boys are dead.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

184

Buford has calmed down under the sledge-hammer words.

## SHAFT

There'll be statues of you all over Mississippi one of these days with big letters saying -- "This here is the nigger who led the sheep to slaughter!"

## ANOTHER ANGLE

185

His attention turns to Knocks, who is no longer holding Buford.

## SHAFT

And you, you're worse. He's a crazy Judas - but you got maybe a couple thousand dollars in the bank for every piece of brain and bone that's sprayed around that roof. You got the silver and you'd lie every goddamn one of us into hell for more of it!

## ANOTHER ANGLE

186

Shaft takes Knocks' cash envelops out of his pocket, throws it on the desk and stalks to the door. He turns and looks back at them.

## SHAFT

You know what I mean? I mean neither one of you bastards is worth a damn to me, to the black people, to Beatrice, wherever the hell she is right now.

## INT. KNOCKS PERSONS'S BROWNSTONE-HALLWAY - NIGHT

187

Shaft, slamming door to Persons' office behind him, stalks into paneled hallway toward elevator (CAMERA) while TWO GUARDS, husky, tall, black men at either side of the door, react to his exit with surprise.

## ANGLE ON SHAFT - TRACKING SHOT

188

He's cool, calm, smiling slightly coming down hallway.

## KNOCKS PERSONS' VOICE (o.s.)

Shaft?

## PERSONS' POV - SHAFT

189

FROM door of office, PAST guards SCREEN RIGHT and LEFT to Shaft in profile, at door to elevator. There is a pause before his head turns slowly.

## REVERSE ANGLE - CLOSEUP PERSONS

190

## PERSONS

We still need to talk.

## REVERSE ANGLE - CLOSEUP SHAFT

191

## SHAFT (a beat)

Straight?

## REVERSE ANGLE - CLOSEUP PERSONS

192

PERSONS

Straight.

## ANGLE WIDENS

193

to include men at door, bewildered by the exchange and looking from Persons to Shaft, then to include Shaft. He's thinking about it.

## INT. PERSONS' OFFICE - DESK - HIGH ANGLE - NIGHT

194

OVERHEAD SHOT of Persons, Buford and Shaft grouped at desk again - all three shouting at each other. Their voices overlap in the explosive spluttering of fierce emotion.

BUFORD

I won't help a pig who brings  
misery to the brothers.

PERSONS

Somebody's gonna wipe your nose  
in that talk, sonny.

SHAFT

What is this bullshit?  
(to Buford)  
Will you stop making speeches?

## ANGLE ON BUFORD

195

Whose anger turns to a cold fire.

BUFORD

Maybe you need speeches, Shaft -  
Maybe you should listen sometime  
to what's happening. What that  
sonofabitch

(indicating Persons)

does is control the source of more  
fucking misery for the black people  
of Harlem, than whitey every dreamed  
of holding.

SHAFT

What's the matter - don't you  
believe in equal opportunity?



## ANOTHER ANGLE

196

BUFORD

One day it's going to be a crime  
for a sonofabitch like you to call  
himself black - for you, for him,  
for everybody else who stands for  
and with the corruption of the  
community --and maybe then we won't  
have thirteen year old kids layin'  
dead in the alleys OD'd on heroin.

SHAFT (coldly,  
intrigued)  
What's heroin got to do with it?

BUFORD

A lot - everything. Every goddam  
ounce of it in East Harlem goes  
through his fingers.

PERSONS

It ain't that way - not like that.

BUFORD

The hell it's not like that - ten,  
maybe twenty million dollars a year -  
and every nickel, dime and dollar  
of it in your pockets!

SHAFT

Heroin? I'll be goddamned.  
(a beat)

Wait a minute. Wait a minute.

Persons and Buford stop.

## ANOTHER ANGLE - SHAFT

197

SHAFT (to Persons)

Tell me about the snow in Spanish  
Harlem, Knocks. Isn't that the mob?

PERSONS (a long pause,  
looking back and forth)  
The Mafia got out about five years  
ago.

BUFORD

And he took over.

SHAFT  
Why?

197  
CONT'D  
(2)

PERSONS  
They didn't have no people - no  
young people.

BUFORD  
The third generation Mafiosos goes  
to the Harvard Business School -  
to learn how to handle the real  
estate. The mob was going to let  
the Puerto Ricans do the leg work,  
the crappy little jobs like  
pushing. They'd control the source  
where the money was.

(beat)  
But they pulled back - and the  
Spaniards got nothing.

(indicating Knocks)  
He did.

SHAFT (getting up,  
leaning over desk)  
Let's talk...  
(he pokes at the  
brown envelope)  
...about my revised rate schedule  
now that we know a little more  
about the working conditions.

EXT. KNOCKS PERSONS' BROWNSTONE-STEPS - NIGHT

198

From sidewalk to door, Shaft and Buford coming out  
together and down steps toward CAMERA. They turn  
and walk toward Columbus Avenue.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT AND BUFORD

199

SHAFT  
That's where the power is, Ben.  
You can get a big piece of it - if  
you go the right away.

BUFORD  
The people hold the cards now - and  
I'll see them throw your body in  
the fire - right next to his - and  
all that money with it. Nobody "owns"  
Harlem anymore. Nobody gives it  
away.

Shaft looks at him and shakes his head. It goes on and on.

199  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT

Ben, goddamit, I....

(beat)

Oh, forget it.

(beat)

Ben, I'm sorry you lost those cats on the roof.

DISSOLVE INTO:

EXT. JANE STREET - WEST OF HUDSON - PANNING SHOTS - NIGHT 200

FROM a vantage point between a car and a Volks bus, Shaft is standing in the street, looking east to his apartment building. The view is past the orange glove lights of the No Name Bar. The side door of the bar opens and a TWENTYISH COUPLE comes out, the juke box and crowd sounds flaring briefly. They walks west on Jane and CAMERA TRACKS THEM briefly, then PANS back to the apartment.

ANOTHER ANGLE - TRACKING SHOTS - SHAFT 201

As he flicks a cigarette into the gutter and emerges from between the vehicles, crosses Jane and goes to the side entrance of the bar.

INT. NO NAME BAR - SIDEDOOR - HIGH ANGLE - PANNING SHOTS - NIGHT 202

ANGLE ON DOOR 203

As Shaft comes into typical Greenwich Village bar scene - upper middle class Village, the hair long, but not over-long, the MALES twenty to thirty in a mixture of corduroys and blazers, shirts without ties, the WOMEN in the same age group, in minis and slacks, blouses and sweaters. There are about twenty of them in the place, five black, one Oriental. We see this as CAMERA PANS swiftly from Shaft to an inspection of the crowd. We pick up TWO BLACK MALES AND A BLONDE at the end of the bar; ROLLIE NICKERSON, tall and angular white bartender busy drawing mugs of beer. And past Nickerson to the end of the reverse L-shaped mahogany, where the end stools in front of the window to the right of

the door, are occupied by Carmen Corelli and Patsy, one looking at his drink and the crowd while the other looks out the window. They look as out of place in this artsy-craftsy crowd as two toads sitting on a birthday cake. HOLD for a moment and PAN swiftly back to Shaft moving into the crowd. He's taking off his jacket, rolling up his sleeves as he moves toward the two black men and the blonde at the end of the bar. The men look up suspiciously, the blonde speculatively as he gets close to them.

## ANGLE ON TWO MEN, BLONDE

204

Shaft hands one of the men his coat.

## FIRST BLACK DRINKER

Who you gonna fight?

## SHAFT (smiling)

Everybody in the joint - got to get back there and go to work...I'll take it in a minute.

The men relax. He wasn't after the girl. As Shaft ducks under the tunnel behind the girl to the area behind the bar, the second drinker holds up the coat and passes it over to him. Shaft tosses it on the back bar.

## SHAFT'S POV - NICKERSON

205

FROM the back of the bar to Nickerson, so busy making drinks that he's oblivious of Shaft's presence, to Carmen and Patsy as Patsy swivels back to face the bar and Carmen turns around slowly to maintain the vigil over the building across the street. They ignore Shaft (the CAMERA), Nickerson serves a drink, turns, and notices. Smiling, he ignores customers at bar and walks toward Shaft.

## NICKERSON (extending hand,

palm up)

Hey, baby.

## ANGLE ON SHAFT

206

He's smiling. Bringing a hand down on top of Nickerson's in the "gimme some skin" slap.

CLOSEUP - HANDS

207

We catch a glimpse of two fifty dollar bills in Shaft's hand, being laid on Nickerson's open palm.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT, NICKERSON

208

Nickerson glances down OUT OF FRAME.

SHAFT (softly)  
Go around and take a break.

ANGLE WIDENS

209

as Nickerson starts to move around Shaft with a friendly slap on the shoulder.

NICKERSON  
You just bought yourself a saloon.

SHAFT  
Easy.

Nickerson moves OUT OF FRAME and turns up soon among the drinkers as Shaft goes to work, tending bar. We can see that he has another large brown envelope in his back pocket, this one torn open. He serves a couple of beers, turns to the register.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT AND THE REGISTER

210

He's about to punch a key, hesitates. He doesn't know which of the buttons to hit. Finally clips the long black bar on the side of the keys and looks relieved when the cash drawer comes open. He makes change of a dollar and leaves the drawer open.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHAFT, CARMEN, PATSY

211

Shaft reaches the end of the bar, nods to the thugs, points to their glasses.

SHAFT  
You ready?

Patsy looks over his shoulder, Carmen straight on.  
There is no recognition.

211  
CONT'D  
(2)

CARMEN

Yeah, why not?

Shaft bends over to get ice cubes from the tub beneath the edge of the bar.

SHAFT'S POV - UNDER BAR - CLOSEUP .38

212

We see a sub-nose .38 Smith and Wesson dangling upside down on a cup hook that has been screwed into underside of bar.

SHAFT, PATSY, CARMEN

213

Shaft comes up, drops ice in their glasses, picks up bottle of Johnny Walker Black that has been set out from the row of bottles. Pours for them, gets himself a chaser glass and gives it an inch or so of scotch. He raises his glass in a toast to them.

SHAFT

House buys one.

They smile. The PHONE RINGS under the bar, Shaft reaching for it quickly.

SHAFT

No Name Bar.

He covers mouthpiece with his hand, looks around crowd.

SHAFT (into phone)

Ain't here.

He hangs up, goes back to other customers.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ACROSS PATSY AND CARMEN

214

Rollie Nickerson pushes through the drinkers to the bar, with three glasses, puts them on bar.

SHAFT AND NICKERSON

215

NICKERSON

Three vodka and tonic, boy. Chop-chop.

SHAFT (putting bottle  
on bar)  
Pour your own goddamn drink, boy.

215  
CONT'D  
(2)

NICKERSON  
My name ees Count Dracula and I  
leev een a keastle in Transylvania,  
where I don't take sheet from nobody.  
(a beat as he picks up  
bottle)  
You call dot a baloney sendvich?

SHAFT (indicating  
girls at table behind  
Nickerson)  
Who're they?

CAMERA PANS TO VALERIE AND LINDA

216

fairly attractive girls in their twenties wearing  
minis, tank shirts, their hair short. They're  
smoking, talking, looking at Nickerson and Shaft.

NICKERSON (o.s.)  
The one with the big boobs is  
mine...And the one with the big  
nose is yours.

ANGLE ON SHAFT

217

He nods, smiles at the girls and turns to go back  
down the bar.

SHAFT (aside, to  
Nickerson)  
Last pig takes what's left.  
(beat)  
Be right with you.

Shaft goes back down the bar, serving a beer on the  
way, refusing payment for it. He appears slightly  
smashed. When he reaches Patsy and Carmen, he pours  
them fresh drinks without asking, pours himself another  
belt and throws it down.

SHAFT  
Can't walk on one leg.

P.71

He picks up the phone, dials and listens. Patsy and Carmen pay close attention.

217  
CONT'D  
(2)

INT. ELLIE MOORE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

218

Ellie reaches out for RINGING TELEPHONE, groans with sleep.

ELLIE

Um-uh?

BACK TO SHAFT

219

On the phone.

SHAFT (smiling at  
Carmen)  
Hey, baby. I'm gonna be late  
gettin' home. Boss say he want  
to talk wid me.

BACK TO ELLIE

220

On the phone.

ELLIE (shaking awake)  
John? Is that you? Are you drunk?

BACK TO SHAFT

221

On the phone.

SHAFT  
No, baby, Is all righ'. Had me  
a glass o'beer but thassall. Jes  
got some business to talk. Gonna  
be a little late.

He raises a chaser glass with more scotch, drinks it as Carmen and Patsy smile.



BACK TO ELLIE

222

On the phone.

ELLIE

I don't understand. I'm going  
back to sleep. Ring the bell  
hard when you get here.

She hangs up, groans across bed to look at the  
clock -- it's 1:30 -- and lies back on the pillow.

SHAFT

223

He's doing a kind of cackling nigger knee-slap  
routine for the two amused hoods. Still holding  
the phone, he lifts the receiver again and dials.

PATSY (smiling)

Old lady gives you a hard time, eh?

SHAFT

Not as hard as I give her, man.

Patsy and Carmen chuckle as Shaft raises phone to  
his ear.

SHAFT (crooning into  
phone)

Hey, sweetmeat. This here's yo'  
big daddy Jelly Roll and I got  
what you want.

Carmen and Patsy are almost drooling.

INT. ANDEROSZI'S HOME - BEDROOM - ANDEROSZI - NIGHT

224

A match flashes and lights the face of Anderozzi,  
cigarette in his mouth, sitting on the side of the  
bed in pajama bottoms, no top, the form of MRS.  
ANDEROSZI in the other side of the double bed.

ANDEROSZI

Where are you?

BACK TO SHAFT

225

On the phone.

SHAFT

Down at de ol' No Name Bar, jes  
waitin' for you.

BACK TO ANDEROZZI

226

On the phone.

ANDEROZZI (alert,

pencil in hand)

How many are there?

BACK TO SHAFT

227

On the phone.

SHAFT (looking at  
watch, feigning difficulty  
reading numbers)

'Bout two -- thass right.

(he covers mouthpiece with  
his hand, speaks to Carmen)

She's so hot. Ahm 'bout to make  
it on the phone!

(back into phone)

That's right, baby. Up front for  
you all the way.

BACK TO ANDEROZZI

228

On the phone.

ANDEROZZI

I think I'll go back to sleep and  
let you figure it out, Captain  
Marvel.

(he pushes down buttons  
for disconnect; turns to  
look at his wife)

Will you for Christ's sake get up and  
make a cup of coffee?

Mrs. Anderozzi sleeps on. The lieutenant begins to  
dial.

INT. NO NAME BAR - BACK BAR

229

Shaft has moved back down the bar serving beers. He glances toward the front of the place and moves back toward Patsy and Carmen.

CARMEN (sipping drink,  
leering lasciviously)  
Hey, Leroy. What's this broad you  
were talking to look like? Pretty  
hot, huh?

CLOSE - SHAFT

230

SHAFT (eyes glancing  
left, out of frame)  
I'll tell you, man, She's green  
and black and up on top she's got  
this big sir-reen that goes whooooo-  
eeeeee every time old John Shaft  
whistles.

CLOSEUP - CARMEN

231

The leer fades. There is a sudden blur of movement.

ANOTHER ANGLE

232

THREE UNIFORMED COPS are just inside the door of the No Name holding riot guns on Patsy and Carmen, and Shaft has the .38 out from under the bar, pointed at Corelli's neck and a bottle of Johnny Walker in the other hand.

SHAFT  
Just don't do it. Don't even  
breathe.

One of the cops moves forward, frisks them and removes two pistols from belts of Patsy and Carmen, who turns to look at Shaft. He spits in Shaft's face.

CLOSEUP - CARMEN

233

The Johnny Walker bottle in Shaft's hand smashes across Corelli's face in an explosion of glass, booze and blood. There are GROANS, shuffles, grabbing of the hoodlums, CURSES.

DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. NO NAME BAR - BEHIND BAR - NIGHT

234

Shaft is bending over the washtub, letting water run on a slash across his left hand. The .38 is sticking out of the other back pocket. He turns off water, reaches up on the bar for bottle of vodka and pours the alcohol into the cut - wincing.

SHAFT

Mmmmm. That smarts.

ANGLE WIDENS

235

to take in Linda and Valerie now sitting at the bar, Nickerson at light switch turning things down. The place has been cleared out. Shaft holds out his hand to Linda, who strips two Band-aids over it.

LINDA

You should let a doctor look at that.

SHAFT

I get worse cuts shaving.

ANGLE ON LINDA

236

She's still putting the Band-aids in place, holding his hand.

LINDA

Or I could kiss it and make it better.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT

237

looking up from hands to OUT OF FRAME girl. Yes indeed. And that's not all.

INT. SHAFT'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

238

He's looking at himself in the mirror. He's a mess, too. Tired, dirty. The coat's torn, shirt's wrinkled and dirty, the trousers baggy and rumpled.

LINDA'S VOICE (o.s.)

Is your name Shaft - or do they just call you that?

Shaft shakes his head in disgust at the appearance of his clothes, glances to the shower and starts to strip.

238  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT

They just call me that.  
(beat)

There's a bottle of scotch on top of the fridge - and a bottle of vodka in it if you want a drink.

INT. SHAFT'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

239

Linda emerges from the kitchen with a drink and looks around the plain, rather ordinary apartment with a couple of vinyl club chairs, one white globe lamp burning on a side table.

LINDA

How long you going to be? I need some john time.

Her answer is the SOUND of the shower. She sips the drink, kicks off the shoes and unhooks her skirt.

INT. SHAFT'S APARTMENT - SHOWER - NIGHT

240

Shaft in the shower, letting the hot water pour down on him. He's reveling in it, letting it cascade over his head and face. Oh, that feels good. He turns to face the nozzle. He is really luxuriating - and suddenly he jumps in surprise, his head banging against the nozzle, then spinning around as quickly as he can on the slippery surface.

SHAFT

What...?

ANGLE WIDENS

241

There's Linda, in the shower, smiling, nude.

LINDA

You're ticklish.

She bends to take the soap from rack and starts soaping his chest. She moves the soap lower and lower.

LINDA  
Now I know why they call you Shaft.

241  
CONT'D  
(2)

OUTSIDE TUB

242

SHOOTING from outside shower curtain, we can see Linda's ass and back in profile, Shaft's arms around her, his face buried in her neck. They are driving for each other to make it standing up. Shaft reaches out to hold them steady by gripping the towel rack. There is a lot of grappling, giggling, groping.

SHAFT  
Hang on, baby!

There is so much steam the lens fogs up.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - INTERROGATION ROOM -  
NIGHT

243

UNIFORMED COP guards Carmen, his head wrapped in bandages with Anderozzi sitting on edge of small wood table, in sport jacket, slacks, loafers, no tie. Carmen bends over, cradling head in hands. He hurts.

ANDEROZZI  
What were you doing in that bar?

There is no response.

ANDEROZZI  
Answer me, punk, or I'll put that  
jig in a cell with you and let him  
kick in the rest of your head.

Carmen looks up.

CARMEN  
I was just havin' a drink, is all.

ANDEROZZI  
You always carry a gun when you  
have a drink?

CARMEN

I was carryin' it for a friend -  
he owed me a ten - he wanted me  
to hold something of his.

243  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANDEROZZI

Bullshit. You never had ten to  
lend. Who gave you the gun?

CARMEN

I don't know. Some guy.

Carmen lowers his head.

CARMEN

Oh, God, it hurts.

The door opens and the Commissioner comes into the  
room. Anderozzi nods to cop, who takes Carmen out.

ANOTHER ANGLE

244

COMMISSIONER

Anything?

ANDEROZZI

Nah.

COMMISSIONER

How long are you going to let Shaft  
run loose?

ANDEROZZI

As long as we can. He's into  
things we can't get to.

COMMISSIONER

How tough is he?

ANDEROZZI

Probably not as tough as he thinks  
he is. A lot tougher than anybody  
expects. Somewhere in there.  
(beat)

## ANGLE ON ANDEROZZI

245

ANDEROZZI (cont'd)

But his value is that he doesn't stop to think a lot. He moves - and every ounce of that man is muscle and hate when he's up against it.

## INT. SHAFT'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - PANNING SHOT - NIGHT

246

Street-light illumination shows nude Linda sprawled out on Shaft's bed, dead asleep, the RADIO murmuring soft jazz on a nightstand and the dial glowing. Other forms in the room - dresser, lamp, chair and Shaft himself - are barely distinguishable in the darkness. But we do find Shaft as CAMERA PANS to the dresser. He's nude, digging for clothes, black on black. He finds black jeans, socks, black T-shirt, pulls them on swiftly, whistling through his teeth to the music. He pauses to look at girl's bare body reflectively. What do you do with them after you're done with them?

## ANGLE ON CLOCK RADIO

247

as Shaft sets the alarm for seven a.m., then changes it to six and finds a blasting rock station before flicking clock to alarm position. At the same time, we can see that it is about 3:20.

## SHAFT'S KITCHEN - PANNING SHOTS

248

A Chemex pot of coffee has dripped. He pours into white porcelain cup, raises it and sips, looking between slats of Venetian blind, - a black on black figure with an almost disembodied white cup moving to his lips. He puts the cup down and picks up gray trousers to remove gun, which goes into his belt, and keys, change and the brown envelope. Shaft taps the envelope in his hand a moment, then goes to the refrigerator, puts it behind the green peas in the freezer compartment. He picks up a black oilskin jacket from a chair and slips it on, takes a last sip of coffee. There's work to be done.



EXT. SHAFT'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HUDSON STREET -  
PANNING SHOTS - NIGHTS

249

FROM wholesale fish market midway between Jane and Abingdon Square on west side of Hudson, CAMERA scans Shaft's silent building, pausing briefly at the third-floor window, considers the fire escape and comes down to sidewalk. Behind the grill between Shaft's building and the Abingdon Square apartments, a large white German Shepherd rests in the shadows, watching the street through the high steel bars.

ANGLE NARROWS

250

on the dog as CAMERA MOVES IN THROUGH the grill.  
The dog turns its head.

DOG'S POV

251

LOOKING INTO SHADOWS, there's Shaft, hugging the wall, looking back and forth from OUT OF FRAME street to OUT OF FRAME DOG.

SHAFT (very softly,  
to dog)  
Nice and quiet - that's it - pretend  
I'm a burglar -

EXT. HUDSON STREET - SHAFT'S POV

252

THROUGH the iron grill and OVER the dog as an empty Ninth Avenue owl bus comes south on Hudson. As the bus draws near, the FRAME is blurred by movement, there is a slight NOISE of iron rattling under the sound of the bus and Shaft goes up and over the fence, landing running on the other side.

EXT. BLEECKER STREET - SIDEWALK - TRACKING SHOT -  
NIGHT

253

FROM the street Shaft moving swiftly east on Bleecker between Abingdon Square and Christopher.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SIXTH AVENUE AND BLEECKER - STREET - ZOOM  
SHOT - NIGHT

254

Shaft is a small, lonely figure coming into Sixth Avenue at a trot, stopping a moment. ZOOM IN on his face.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT

255

There's a light film of sweat on him now, his eyes bright with tension, his face determined, mean and calculating. He starts to move again.

EXT. SULLIVAN STREET AT WEST HOUSTON

256

The street is lighted by the marquee of an Italian restaurant-bar as Shaft comes up, looks at sign and turns to enter.

INT. FIRST ITALIAN RESTAURANT - BAR - SHAFT'S  
POV - NIGHT

257

The fiftyish, bespectacled BARTENDER is scrubbing glasses, cleaning up, and there is ONE LAST DRINKER oozing over the edge of the bar on his elbows. The bartender looks up at the SOUND of the opening door and freezes cold. He straightens very slowly. The One Last Drinker doesn't notice anything. A FAT WAITRESS comes around a corner with handful of her tip change.

FAT WAITRESS

Mario, I got -

She freezes, too, and lowers the hand, trying to hide it behind her apron as surreptitiously as possible.

ANGLE WIDENS

258

to Shaft leaning on the end of the bar.

SHAFT

Hey, man, where's the Mafia have  
its place around here?

Neither bartender nor waitress responds. They don't quite believe it. When he's going to get on with the stickup?

SHAFT (impatiently)  
You know, the Mob. Where do they  
hang their guns?

258  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANGLE ON BARTENDER

259

who swallows on a dry throat.

BARTENDER (nervously)  
You better - you got the wrong  
place, mister.

ANGLE ON SHAFT

260

as he unzips jacket, revealing pistol butt in his  
belt.

SHAFT  
Yeah - maybe so. Uh - but any of  
them happen to drop around, tell  
them John Shaft is looking. Got  
that name? Shaft.

He turns to go.

ANGLE ON BARTENDER AND WAITRESS

261

watching OUT OF FRAME Shaft depart. The woman  
raises her hand. It is shaking so hard all the  
change pours out on the floor. The drunk looks  
up at the jingle.

THE LAST DRINKER  
Answer the phone.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT./INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT-BARS - MONTAGE -  
SHAFT - NIGHT

262-265

A MONTAGE of four scenes, Shaft going into other  
Italian restaurants, asking the bartender where he  
can find the Mafia, coming out and running down  
the streets of the dark, deserted Village.

INT. THE LAST BAR - CLOSEUP SHAFT

266

His face is covered with sweat, he's breathing heavily.

SHAFT

The Mafia, goddammit. I read about 'em all the time. Where the hell are they?

INT. FIGARO COFFEE SHOP - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

267

THROUGH cake rack and expresso apparatus to Shaft, coming in the door. He comes (toward CAMERA) to the diagonally opposite corner of the room and sits.

ANOTHER ANGLE

268

Shaft sitting at the table, approached by a twenty-ish, long-haired BLONDE WAITRESS. He's breathing hard, watching the door closely, tensely.

SHAFT

Huh? - Oh, a cup of expresso. Okay?

BLONDE WAITRESS

Anything else? Cake? Pastry?

SHAFT

Uh-no. Just the coffee, please.

She smiles and moves off.

ANGLE ON SHAFT

269

CAMERA goes into his lap. He removes a .38 from belt and lays it in the folds of slacks. He looks to the windows.

SHAFT'S POV - PANNING SHOT

270

There is a small cluster of TWO GIRLS and YOUNG MAN, hippie types, sitting at table near the Bleecker Street window, a MIDDLE-AGED TOURIST COUPLE at the MacDougal Street window, a twentyish GIRL STUDENT

drinking coffee and reading a book at another table in the middle of the place, while the blonde waitress moves back and forth serving coffee. On one of her trips she brings expresso to Shaft, smiles in genuine friendliness as she puts cup on table.

270  
CONT'D  
(2)

WAITRESS

Oh - I'm sorry. I forgot the lemon peel.

WAITRESS' POV - SHAFT

271

He looks tense, then smiles.

SHAFT

That's all right - let it -  
(beat, as his eyes glance  
to the door)  
--let it go.

SHAFT'S POV - CHARLES CORELLI

272

CHARLES CORELLI, a suave, slim thirtyish Italian with the face of a junior executive and the eyes of a killer, is coming in, walking straight for Shaft's table, without any hesitation or looking around, a confident man in a gray pin-stripe suit, light gray shirt, wide navy blue tie held precisely in place by a tiny gold tie tack.

ANGLE WIDENS

273

to include Shaft and the waitress. Shaft's hand goes casually and slowly to his lap.

SHAFT (looking up)

I'm glad they sent a wop punk like you. We might have missed each other in the crowd.

CORELLI (light smile

as he takes a chair)

I'd know you anywhere, nigger. Why don't you have a slice of watermelon with your coffee.

SHAFT

They put too much garlic in it  
here - and they don't like it  
when I spit the seeds on the other  
customers.

273  
CONT'D  
(2)

ANOTHER ANGLE

274

as they stare at each other speculatively. The  
waitress looks confused, worried. Corelli turns to  
her, smiling graciously.

CORELLI

Just a regular coffee, please.

She turns away.

SHAFT

You got the girl?

CORELLI

Sure.

SHAFT

How do I know?

CORELLI (starting  
to rise)

Come on - I'll show you. It's  
just around the corner.

ANOTHER ANGLE

275

as the waitress brings Corelli's coffee.

SHAFT

Wait a minute - drink your coffee.

He waits for the waitress to leave.

SHAFT

What if I just call the cops?

CORELLI

Call 'em. They find an empty  
building, ten or fifteen decks  
of smeck - and a spook full of  
needle marks. So what?

SHAFT

You want to deal?

CORELLI (laughing)  
With you? Christ, you're just a  
messenger boy. What kind of a deal  
can I make with you?

275  
CONT'D  
(2)

Shaft's right hand raises the pistol under the table.

SHAFT  
Right now you can make a deal to  
stay alive, you silly motherfucker.  
I just got to the limit of you.

CORELLI (smile  
fading)  
That won't get you anything.

SHAFT  
You'll never know.

CORELLI  
Okay, okay. It's pretty simple.  
We want Harlem.

SHAFT  
Spanish Harlem - where the annual  
snowfall is estimated at about ten  
to twenty million.

CORELLI  
Harlem - all of it.

#### ANOTHER ANGLE

276

SHAFT  
You'll never get it. Do you know  
what's happening with the people  
up there?

CORELLI  
Don't know. Don't care. All of  
it. That's the deal. He's got it.  
We want it.  
(beat)  
For that, you get one girl.

SHAFT  
Let's go take a look.

CORELLI (rising)  
Okay, but I got to make a call  
first.

SHAFT (firmly)  
No calls.

276  
CONT'D  
(2)

Corelli hesitates, shrugs and turns to lead Shaft out of the place. They pass the hippie group. The young male looks up. And TRACKS Shaft and Corelli out the door.

ANGLE ON HIPPIE

277

He watches Shaft and Corelli pass the window, gets up and goes to a wall telephone nearby. That's funny. He doesn't look Italian.

EXT. BLEECKER STREET - SIDEWALK - TRACKING SHOTS - NIGHT

278

Shaft and Charles Corelli walking east on Bleecker, past Sullivan and the Village Gate to Thompson, where they turn south.

EXT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - STEPS - HIGH ANGLE - NIGHT

279

Corelli leading the way up steps (INTO CAMERA) to door with a new, brass Yale lock, that shines even in the dim, dark corridor.

ANGLE ON CORELLI

280

as he inserts key in the clock, turns it and looks back over his shoulder at o.s. Shaft.

CORELLI (twisted  
smile)  
Listen - uh - the kid's maybe a  
little worse for wear, you know?  
But she's okay.

(beat)  
Just between the two of us, every-  
thing that happened to her - she  
loved it.

Shaft's hand comes INTO FRAME with the .38 and fires it into the side of Corelli's head.



## WIDER ANGLE

281

as Corelli's body is hurled down the hallway and the wall is sprayed with blood.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

282

as Shaft hits the door in a crouch and goes in, gun in hand, savage and ready to kill again. His eyes going everywhere, the gun moving like a cobra.

INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - CORELLI'S ROOM -  
SHAFT'S POV - PANNING SHOTS - NIGHT

283

CAMERA SWEEPS swiftly around the bare, shabby hole with a dresser, a bed and a sink. On the bed Beatrice Persons cringes in terror, whimpering. Shaft moves across the room swiftly.

SHAFT (soothingly)  
It's all right - it's all right.  
(he sits on edge  
of bed)  
We're gonna get you out of here.

## CLOSE-UP - BEATRICE

284

She's whimpering, shaking, her eyes round with terror and glazed with confusion - the face of a teenage girl who has been broken with drugs and physical abuse. She's choking on hysteria and shock, mumbling words we can barely hear.

BEATRICE  
Please...don't...don't...

## SHAFT AND BEATRICE

285

He's trying to reach for her. She's pulling back.

SHAFT  
Where's your clothes? Do you have anything to wear? I want to take you home. Home. Do you understand?

He glances around the room. The word "home" was a trigger for Beatrice. She suddenly throws her arms around Shaft's neck.

285  
CONT'D  
(2)

BEATRICE

Oh, God! Get me out! Take me home. Please, please - take me home.

Shaft disentangles himself from her desperate clutch.

SHAFT

One minute. Just hold on for one minute.

ANGLE ON DRESSER TOP

286

as Shaft moves there swiftly, takes out handkerchief and unfolds it over palm of his left hand. With the muzzle of the .38, he pokes hypo, vials and glassine envelopes off dresser into pouch of kerchief.

SHAFT (to Beatrice)

One minute - we're goin'.

He turns and walks swiftly to the doorway.

INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

287

Corelli's corpse as Shaft leans INTO FRAME and spills contents of kerchief on it.

SHAFT

Get you some flowers later, baby.

In the moment of pause, a machine appears in the FRAME and moves up against Shaft's head, against the skin directly under his left ear. He freezes. It is totally silent.

MACHINEGUNNER'S VOICE

(cool, businesslike)

Come on back into the office for a minute. There's a message we want you to take uptown to Mr. Persons.

INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - CORELLI'S ROOM -  
HAND-HELD CAMERA SHOTS - NIGHT

288

Disembodied white fists, feet, knees, pistol barrels beat the shit out of Shaft. We see him kicked, whipped, stomped, apparently by two men. In the b.g. of the flurry of action is whimpering, terrorized Beatrice. When it ends, Shaft is a senseless, unconscious, wheezing pulp on the floor - with the barrel of the machinegun in the foreground of the final FRAME.

MACHINEGUNNER'S VOICE

Enough. That's the message. He's  
no more trouble.

EXT. KNOCKS PERSONS' BROWNSTONE - STREET - DAWN

289

HIGH OVERHEAD SHOT of the black Pontiac screeching around the corner and down the deserted street. The car squeals to a stop at Knocks' steps and the battered form of John Shaft is pushed out of the car to sprawl half in the gutter half on the sidewalk.

ZOOM SHOT - SHAFT

290

He doesn't twitch. CAMERA ZOOMS IN very slowly to -

CLOSE-UP - SHAFT

291

whose face is pulpy, torn and bleeding.

EXT. PERSONS' BROWNSTONE - WINDOW - DAWN

292

Albert Underwood pulls aside drapery and looks down OUT OF FRAME to the street with Knocks Persons, wearing a bright gold bathrobe. They stand there a moment. Knocks turns and tells Underwood to go get Shaft, to take a kitchen chair and use it as a stretcher.

ANGLE WIDENS

293

to INCLUDE Shaft in Street. Underwood and the two guards who usually stand outside Persons' office emerge in various stages of emergency dress, slacks and undershirt on one, the other wearing pajamas, Underwood in shirt and slacks. They bring a chair and ease Shaft into it - as Knocks watches from the window.

INT. KNOCKS PERSONS' BEDROOM - SHAFT'S POV - DAWN

294

The CAMERA is Shaft's one good eye blinking open.

SHAFT (a groan)

Where...

PERSONS

Easy, don't move.

An ice bag is lifted off Shaft's face and he can get a slightly clearer picture of images fleeting in and out of FOCUS.

ANOTHER ANGLE

295

Persons and his three men are attending Shaft, who tries to move on a blod-stained sheet that covers the bed. He can't rise.

SHAFT

Cocksuckers!

CLOSE-UP - SHAFT

296

A FREEZE FRAME flash of Shaft being kicked in the face.

BACK TO BEDROOM

297

Shaft tries to raise one hand.

PERSONS

Rest easy, boy, there ain't much left of you.

From an abyss of pain, Shaft is trying to say something.

CLOSE-UP - SHAFT

298

A FREEZE FRAME flash of a pistol butt being smashed down on his hand.

SHAFT'S POV

299

SHAFT (croaking)  
Buford - Find Ben Buford.

Persons looks at Underwood quizzically.

UNDERWOOD (to Persons)  
Where's that boy hang out?  
(to Shaft)  
Where do we look?

ANOTHER ANGLE

300

Shaft tries to breathe more deeply to speak, recoils in pain.

SHAFT  
Mama - try his Mama. In the  
phone book on hundred thirtieth  
street.

PERSONS (to  
Underwood and guards)  
Get him.

The two guards leave on the mission.

CLOSE-UP - SHAFT

301

A FREEZE FRAME flash of a knee descending on his ribs as Shaft rolls on the floor.

SHAFT

302

He raises his left arm to look at his watch. The works have been kicked out - there is only a bent circle of gold on his wrist. He lets the arm down slowly.

SHAFT  
I'm gonna -

PERSONS (firmly)  
You can't do nothin'. They did a  
job on you. Just hang on to what  
you got left.

302  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT (beat;  
grimacing)  
Powell...Doc Powell.

ANGLE WIDENS

303

To Underwood.

UNDERWOOD (looking  
to Knocks)  
That's the ring man. The fight man.

PERSONS  
You need a regular doctor.

SHAFT (insistently)  
Powell.

PERSONS (to Underwood)  
Get him. Fast.

Underwood leaves. Alone, Persons looks at Shaft a  
long moment. Shaft's eye blinks open and looks to  
Persons. It is a moment of understanding between  
two strong men. Shaft gets the best he can manage  
of a smile from broken, puffy lips.

SHAFT  
I got to move.

PERSONS (picking up  
towels with ice, packing  
them around Shaft)  
Yeah.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT

304

A FREEZE FRAME flash of Shaft's eyebrow taking a  
pistol-barrel slap that cuts open the flesh.

INT. PERSONS' BROWNSTONE - BEDROOM

305

ACROSS Shaft to door as it is opened by Underwood for RAYMOND "DOC" POWELL, a short, stubby black about fifty, wearing slacks and a gray sweatshirt under a hound's-tooth check jacket and carrying a lizard-skin doctor's satchel. He looks to Knocks and nods respectfully and walks to the side of the bed to look down on Shaft.

SHAFT - POWELL'S POV

306

SHAFT

Come on -- Get to work, Doc.

REVERSE ANGLE

307

Powell looks to Persons with doubt and concern. He shouldn't be involved here.

PERSONS

Do what you can.

A job's a job. Powell puts satchel on the bed, gets out of his jacket.

POWELL

Let's get his clothes off.

ANOTHER ANGLE

308

Powell and Underwood set to stripping Shaft. Powell cuts away Shaft's torn clothes with a blunt-point bandage scissors, with a running monologue of instructions. His movements are swift and expert.

POWELL

Hold him so...Careful...Easy...  
That's it, like a baby. Watch  
that hand...Throw that out...  
That's it...This gonna hurt...  
Let's see that leg...Goddamn, boy,  
they hit you with a truck...Gimme  
that...Close your eye...That's  
good...This gonna sting...You  
probably won't even feel it...  
Move that hand...

As he works, Powell's hands move gently but firmly over Shaft in a Band-aid ballet. His hands dip into the black bag, come out with merthiolate, Q-tips, tape, septic pencil, bandage, pills (which he makes Shaft swallow).

SHAFT

What...

POWELL

Demerol...Gonna sit you up in a minute.

He dabs at Shaft's face cuts with antiseptic, then feels his rib cage as Shaft winces.

POWELL (to Underwood)

Get his other side. Hold him like a baby.

Underwood and Powell gently lift Shaft upright.

POWELL

Hold him straight - hold him straight.

The agony twists Shaft's face.

SHAFT

Oh, MOTHER!

PERSONS

Careful.

POWELL

Hang on boy, hang on. Okay.  
Hold him like that. Knocks, you better help.

Persons steps in to hold Shaft erect as Powell very swiftly begins ripping off strips of tape and winding them around Shaft's lower chest.

SHAFT

309

CAMERA DOLLIES IN on Shaft's face, reflecting all the pain and the anger surging through him. His now-patched mouth moves in an almost silent litany of it.

SHAFT (whispering)

Bastards...bastards...bastards...



## ANGLE WIDENS

As Buford and Persons' men come in. Persons and Underwood barely look up. Buford is obviously just out of bed. He looks at Shaft resentfully, then takes in the damage and the bloodstains. The look changes to, "Well, you finally got yours," then to one of concern as he walks around the bed to face Shaft.

SHAFT (holding out  
left hand to Powell)  
The hand. I need it.

POWELL  
I can tape it up, but you got  
to get an X-ray.

SHAFT  
Freeze it.

POWELL  
I can't...

SHAFT  
I need the goddamn hand, man. You  
got novocain in there  
(indicating satchel)  
freeze it!  
(to Underwood)  
Get me some clothes --  
(beat)  
And a gun.

BUFORD  
Are you out of your goddamned mind?  
(to Persons)  
He looks like a subway ran over  
him -- he belongs in a hospital.

PERSONS (looking to  
Buford, then Shaft)  
What kind of gun?

SHAFT  
Forty-five. Couple of extra clips.

Underwood goes out to get gun and clothes.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHAFT, BUFORD, POWELL

311

Doc is shooting novocain into Shaft's left hand.

BUFORD

For Christ's sake you can't --

The sentence dies. Shaft is doing it. Underwood comes in with slacks, shirt, shoes and socks and a .45 caliber automatic wrapped in oilskin. Underwood starts helping Shaft into clothes as Shaft takes the gun, jacks it into firing position and snaps off a click on the empty chamber. Then he takes clip from Underwood and fits it into gun butt.

SHAFT (looking up  
as he slips feet into shoes)  
Gimme a hand, Ben. I can't bend  
over.

Buford hesitates long and hard, then kneels to tie Shaft's shoes.

BUFORD

What are you trying to do, John?

SHAFT

I'm doing what you're always talking  
about.

(beat)

I need fifteen, maybe twenty, of  
your people.

(beat)

You give a pretty good shine for  
being out of practice.

BUFORD (getting up)

Fuck you. Did you drag me here for  
this?

SHAFT (serious)

Now's the time to make your deal,  
baby. But there's no time to argue  
you into it.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT

312

SHAFT

Gimme your jacket if you got nothing  
else to offer.

(beat)

I got to go kill three or four mother-  
fuckers who need killing.

BUFORD

You're out of your mind -- your  
brains are scrambled.

312  
CONT'D  
(2)

But he starts to take off his jacket.

ANGLE WIDENS

313

Shaft wobbles as he steps away from bed. He's  
having trouble, but he's moving. HOLD on his  
tentative steps.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER DRIVE - WHITE OLDS - ZOOM SHOT -  
DAWN

314

LONG SHOT of the Hudson River Drive before we ZOOM  
IN on Albert Underwood driving a white Olds with  
Shaft in the back seat.

INT. WHITE OLDS - BACK SEAT

315

We go into the car where Shaft is propped up in  
a corner making a huge ball of newspaper, tying  
it with rope. There's a bright-red can of gasoline  
on the seat beside him. It is clumsy work with a  
bandaged hand, pain in each movement. But he's  
doing it.

UNDERWOOD

You okay?

SHAFT

Yeah. Just get me there.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - BUFORD'S CARS- DAWN

316

Ben Buford in the front passenger seat of a late  
model sedan, riding down Fifth Avenue with five  
militants.

ANGLE WIDENS

317

to reveal it is one of three cars, each containing  
five or six black men from his group of militants.

EXT. SULLIVAN STREET - STREET - DAWN

318

The white Olds turns into Sullivan from West Houston and rolls TOWARD CAMERA and a parking place at a fire hydrant. Underwood gets out, reaches in to help Shaft, his can of gas, the paper ball tied with rope.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT AND UNDERWOOD

319

Underwood is looking around nervously.

SHAFT

Don't worry. They give you a parking ticket, I'll pay it.

(beat)

Come on.

They turn toward a small five-story apartment building and go into the lobby.

EXT. LOWER FIFTH AVENUE - BEN BUFORD'S CARS - DAWN

320

Buford leading, the three cars turn off Fifth into the low-level parking garage of a large swank apartment house.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - BUFORD'S CARS - DAWN

321

FROM glassed-in office of STARTLED ATTENDANT, a twentyish white in mechanic's chinos, as the Buford cars whip into the garage -- one, two, three, and SCREECH to stops.

BUFORD'S POV

322

Attendant approaching cars hesitantly.

ATTENDANT

I'm sorry, we're fu...

REVERSE ANGLE

323

The massing collection of determined black men.

P.100

ATTENDANT (swallowing  
hard)  
How long -- do you think you'll be?

323  
CONT'D  
(2)

EXT. SULLIVAN STREET APARTMENT - ROOFTOP - ROOF  
HATCH - DAWN

324

Roof hatch pops off and Shaft's head appears. He  
looks down the hatch to OFF-SCREEN Underwood.

SHAFT

Push!

Shaft is seemingly lifted upward and crawls out on  
the tar. Underwood follows with gas, paper.

EXT. LOWER FIFTH AVENUE - SIDEWALK - TRACKING SHOT -  
DAWN

325

Three, four and five abreast, with Buford in the  
lead, the band of militants marches south on Fifth  
Avenue toward Washington Square Park.

EIGHTH STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE - SIDEWALK - DAWN

326

A mid-twentyish UNIFORMED COP, walking the Eighth  
Street beat, approaches the corner of Fifth Avenue.  
He's bored, tired and playing diddly-bop with his  
nightstick, pauses to look at the display in the  
Brentano's Eighth Street window. CAMERA DOLLIES IN  
as he looks and glances up toward us (Fifth Avenue)  
at a momentary distraction.

COP'S POV

327

The band of militants marching across Eighth Street  
toward Washington Square Park.

REVERSE ANGLE - CLOSEUP - COP

328

His face reflects official concern and disbelief  
at the sight of this hideous black presence on pure  
white Fifth Avenue at this hour. It's got to be  
trouble. But he's so seriously outnumbered.

EXT. SULLIVAN STREET APARTMENT - ROOFTOP - DAWN

329

Shaft and Underwood at the five-story chasm between the building on Sullivan and the one he wants on Thompson.

SHAFT (looking down,  
then to Underwood)  
Get some boards. Got to be some  
around.  
" (he scans rooftop)  
Over there.

SHAFT'S POV

330

CAMERA PANS to rooftop construction project - portable cement mixer, pulley rig, etc. Underwood comes INTO FRAME, begins gathering boards, carrying them back toward Shaft (CAMERA).

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - FOURTH STREET - DAY

331

Buford and his men at the entrance to Washington Square Park, arch in the b.g., still a tight cluster.

BUFORD  
Okay, Billy, split.

BILLY, a tall, twentyish black in a leather coat, nods and separates from main group with THREE OTHER MILITANTS in similar dress and heads into the park, toward Thompson on the south side.

BUFORD (to others)  
Spread. Wait for my move.

The gang disperses, two by two as Buford watches. They're heading for the steps of the beautiful brownstones on the north side of the park.

EXT. SULLIVAN STREET TENEMENT - ROOFTOP - DAWN

332

Shaft and Underwood have placed four planks across the chasm between the buildings.

UNDERWOOD (really  
worried)  
Goddammit, man. You can't do it.  
(beat)  
How you gonna carry that?

332  
CONT'D  
(2)

SHAFT  
Albert, shut up. Throw the paper  
over there and get out of here.  
I'll be down front in ten minutes.  
(beat)  
Go, man.

Underwood picks up the rope-tied ball of paper, whirls  
it and throws it across the chasm. It lands on the  
other roof. He throws the rest of the rope after it.

SHAFT  
See you, baby.

UNDERWOOD  
Easy.

EXT. BROWNSTONE DOOR - WINDOW - CLOSEUP - DAWN

333

A geranium pot is hurled through listening window  
beside a door.

INT. BROWNSTONE - BEDROOM - DAWN

334

The BROWNSTONE OWNER, a fiftyish plump man lying  
asleep in his bed, wearing pajamas, sits bolt upright  
as the sound of shattering glass echoes around him.

EXT. BROWNSTONE DOOR - SHATTERED WINDOW - CLOSEUP -  
DAWN

335

Through shards of glass hanging in the frame of the  
shattered window, a twentyish BLACK MILITANT in TIGHT  
CLOSEUP.

BLACK MILITANT (shouting)  
Get you ass out of bed, Whitey - your  
black brother's here to spend the  
weekend!

EXT. SULLIVAN STREET TENEMENT - PLANKS - DAWN

336

Shaft puts the gasoline can out on the planks and gets out on them slowly, painfully. He's going across on his hands and knees. He gets down on the planks and glances OUT OF FRAME.

SHAFT'S POV - THE CHASM

337

It swirls and fogs under his gaze. He concentrates on the planks.

CLOSEUP - SHAFT

338

He leans forward and picks up the gasoline can handle in his teeth - and starts to crawl.

ANOTHER ANGLE - SHAFT IN PROFILE

339

Hands and knees, head down under the weight of the can, inching across the boards.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE - BROWNSTONE STEPS - DAWN

340

Two more BLACK MILITANTS on a brownstone steps, clanging garbage can lids together like huge cymbals.

FIRST MILITANT

Let's hear it for The Revolution!

SECOND MILITANT

Everybody out on the street for the massa-cree.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE APARTMENT BUILDING - CANOPY - DAWN

341

The Police Commissioner walks very swiftly out of his apartment building and dives into his waiting car. HOLD on car as it leaps away from curb and heads downtown, siren on.



EXT. SULLIVAN STREET ROOFTOP - PLANKS - DAWN

342

Shaft, showing intense physical strain, closes his eyes. He looks like he's about to faint. In the silence we hear police and fire sirens -- a lot of them -- beginning to roll toward Washington Square a few blocks away. He opens his eyes, raises his head and starts inching again. HOLD on Shaft as he gets to the end of the boards and slumps off onto the roof of the Thompson Street building.

EXT./INT. COMMISSIONER'S CAR - EAST 30'S - DAWN

343

Anderozzi leaping into the Commissioner's car.

CLOSEUP COMMISSIONER

344

COMMISSIONER

They're tearing Washington Square apart.

CLOSEUP ANDEROSZZI

345

ANDEROSZZI

They picked the right hour for it.  
Who's on it?

CLOSEUP - COMMISSIONER

346

COMMISSIONER

Everything on duty.

He turns to look grimly OUT OF FRAME at the city he expects to go up in flames.

EXT. THOMPSON STREET - SIDEWALK - DAWN

347

FROM ROOFTOP to Billy and THREE OTHER MILITANTS, standing in front of apartment where Beatrice is being held. They're looking at the roof.

REVERSE ANGLE - BILLY'S POV

348

There's Shaft. He signals to them and starts lowering ball of paper on rope. Part way down he raises can of gasoline and pours it down on paper, then the rope that holds it. He lowers the soggy ball to a point just outside a black-shaded window of the building. The SOUND of sirens and rioting is rising from Washington Square.

EXT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - ROOFTOP - DAWN

349

Shaft puts a match to the rope and turns to limp away across the rooftop, pulling the .45 from his belt as he goes.

BILLY'S POV

350

Flame inches down the rope and the ball of paper explodes into a flaming mass.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE - BROWNSTONE STEPS - DAWN

351

A sixtyish WHITE MAID in uniform of housedress and apron, is using a broom to beat on a garbage can lid carried as a shield by a grinning black militant. Noise of sirens and shouting swirl around them.

MAID

You get out of here with all that noise. You hear me? You get away from here!

She whacks away at the shield with little effect, much noise.

INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - ROOF LADDER - LOW ANGLE - DAWN

352

FROM BOTTOM OF LADDER to Shaft, near bottom of ladder, using arm of gun hand to hang on, other to hold gas can.

## WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - TREE - DAWN

353

Ben Buford and black militant running, then stop.  
SOUNDS of battle around them.

BLACK MILITANT

Where the hell are the police  
when you need them?

BUFORD

You're asking the wrong man.  
(beat)  
This way, let's go!

## INT./EXT. COMMISSIONER'S CAR - FIFTH AVENUE - DAWN

354

ACROSS Anderozzi and the Commissioner to UNIFORMED  
LIEUTENANT in bright blue riot helmet, breeches  
and boots, leaning against door.

LIEUTENANT (slightly  
breathless, looking left,  
OUT OF FRAME)

It's apparently not a battle -  
it's a chase. There's about  
fifteen-twenty of them hiding in  
the trees. We're trying to keep  
the residents of the area back.  
They're in an uproar.

(looking at Commissioner)  
It's the goddamdest thing I've  
ever seen. We're protecting the  
rioters.

## INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - STAIRWELL - DAWN

355

Shaft is pouring the last of the gasoline down the  
stairwell. As he finishes he throws the can after  
it, raises the .45 and fires three blasts into the  
ceiling.

SHAFT

Fire! Fire! I smell gas! The  
building's gonna explode!

He backs up against the wall, looking down, and  
starts to go down the stairs one by one. He raises  
the gun and fires into the roof twice again.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - COMMISSIONER'S CAR - DAWN

356

The Commissioner and Anderozzi are standing beside the car with the lieutenant.

COMMISSIONER

Tell the Fire Department to turn the hoses on them. Cool 'em off.

The lieutenant moves off to follow instructions.

ANDEROZZI

I wonder if Shaft's over there someplace?

COMMISSIONER

I'll kill him if he is.

ANDEROZZI

You may not have to!

INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - STAIRWELL - DAWN

357

Shaft moving down the stairs as doors bang open and we hear running feet down the stairs. He fires into the ceiling again, three more times, shakes out clips and reloads.

SHAFT

The niggers are coming!  
Everything's burning. Help!  
Help!

He is on the stairs above the door to Beatrice's cell.

SHAFT'S POV - THE DOOR

358

It opens and a TWENTYISH HOOD with a .38 in his hand dashes out, dashing for the stairs.

REVERSE ANGLE - SHAFT

359

He's got the .45 aimed over the bannister.

SHAFT

Hold it!

## SHAFT'S POV - THE HOOD

360

The gunman spins around firing wildly.

## REVERSE ANGLE - SHAFT

361

Shaft fires, the two guns roaring almost simultaneously.

## SHAFT'S POV - THE HOOD

362

crumpling, staggering, falling with one last shot into the floor.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

363

Shaft continues down the hallway, hugging the wall, toward the door. He's just about there when the empty gas can rattles on the stairs below. Shaft hurls himself to the floor against the bannister posts as a machinegun opens fire from the stairwell, ripping up the old plaster on the wall.

INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - CORELLI'S ROOM -  
DAWN

364

ACROSS Beatrice, sitting up in bed, cringing in terror, to SECOND TWENTYISH HOOD against far wall of room, next to door with .38 in hand, as machinegun slugs rip through wall. Ball of flame outside window roars and lights everything orange. DOLLY IN on hood as slugs rip through him, too, and he slumps to floor while Beatrice screams and screams.

## INT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - HALLWAY - SHAFT

365

Machinegun still roaring from the stairwell, chewing up bannister and posts above his head as Shaft empties the automatic over the edge of the landing.

## SHAFT'S POV - MACHINEGUNNER

366

The MACHINEGUNNER, a thirtyish Italian type taking one of Shaft's slugs in the throat, mouth flying open, gun going suddenly silent.

## SHAFT

367

Slapping another clip into .45 pulling himself to his knees against the shattered bannister and firing the gun again and again into the silent darkness below, as if each slug carries his rage. He is sobbing and there are tears on his face as CAMERA goes in for CLOSE-UP. The shots, Beatrice's o.s. screams become echoes as we

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. THOMPSON STREET TENEMENT - STEPS - MILITANT'S POV

368

The building is almost silent. HOLD on the doorway as Shaft emerges, staggering carrying Beatrice in his arms. She's out cold. Shaft still has the gun in his hand.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

369

as CAMERA goes in with Underwood and Billy's Militants to take the girl from his arms.

SHAFT (to Underwood)  
Easy, man. Take her home.

UNDERWOOD  
What about...?

SHAFT  
Take her home - get out of here.

## EXT. THOMPSON STREET - WHITE OLDS - DAWN

370

FROM REAR of White Olds as it leaps away, heads of Underwood and militants visible through rear window.

SHAFT

371

Standing in the street beside curb. He is at the very end of a strong man's capacity to go on. So he sits down on the curb feet in the gutter, head bowed, gun still dangling in his hand -- we HOLD on him. A Siren beeps lightly and a car is heard to approach. A door slams and feet move quickly o.s. toward Shaft.

ANGLE WIDENS

372

As Anderozzi's legs appear beside Shaft. Shaft does not look up. Anderozzi sits down beside him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

373

Shaft and Anderozzi, sitting side by side. Anderozzi is glancing around.

ANDEROZZI (looking  
at Shaft again)  
You okay?

SHAFT

374

CAMERA DOLLIES IN as he raises his head slowly, painfully.

SHAFT  
I'm alive, ain't I?

SHAFT AND ANDEROZZI - ZOOM SHOT

375

CAMERA ZOOMS away from Shaft and Anderozzi until they become tiny figures.

THE END